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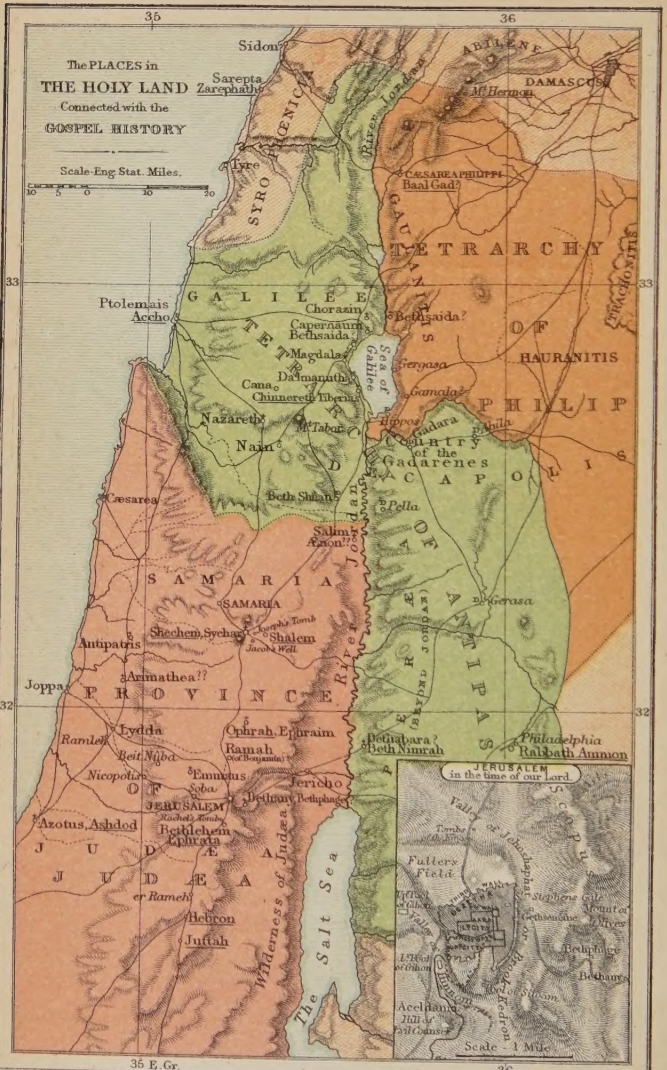

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THE

NEW TESTAMENT

OF

OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR

JESUS CHRIST.

ACCORDING TO THE AUTHORISED VERSION.

WITH A BRIEF COMMENTARY

BY VARIOUS AUTHORS.

THE FOUR GOSPELS.

With Maps and Plans.

BY THE

RIGHT REV. W. WALSHAM HOW, D.D.

Lord Bishop of Wakefield.

PUBLISHED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE TRACT COMMITTEE.

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THE TEXT in this Commentary is a reprint of the last Edition with marginal references, published at the Oxford Press,—with the following differences:

1. Quotations from the Old Testament are printed in thick type. As, for example, in St. Matt. iii. 3.
2. Each new paragraph is headed with the sign ¶ and followed by a space.
3. When a verse does not end with a full stop, the succeeding verse is not begun with a capital letter. See for example the beginning of St. Matthew iii. 9.

It is hoped that the two latter features of the printing will to some extent supply the place of a "Paragraph Bible" to those who aim at an accurate study of the Holy Scriptures; while at the same time it will not interfere with the division into verses which is so familiar to readers.

It will be observed that in the Commentary on the Gospels, each heading of a principal section is accompanied by a reference to the parallel passages in other Gospels.

It may be well to call attention here (though it is also done in the Note to St. Matt. ii. 1.) to the fact that the ordinary system of chronology in use among us, is not strictly accurate. Careful study has established that the Birth of our Blessed Lord took place four years earlier than the date commonly assigned. Thus, assuming that He was born at the time at which we now keep Christmas, the date of the Birth is Christmas-Day B.C. 5, and of the Circumcision, January 1, B.C. 4. In like manner the date of His first Passover is A.D. 9, though He was twelve years old. St. Luke ii. 42.

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MAPS AND PLANS.

		Where placed.
MAP.	The Places in the Holy Land connected with the Gospel History	*Frontispiece.*
MAP.	Jerusalem and the surrounding country	*At the beginning of the Gospel of St. Mark.*
PLANS.	Jerusalem from Josephus . .	*At the beginning of the Gospel of St. Luke.*
	Jerusalem from the Bible . .	
PLANS.	The Temple of Solomon . .	*At the beginning of the Gospel of St. John.*
	The Temple of Herod . . .	

THE GOSPEL

ACCORDING TO

SAINT MATTHEW.

COMMENTARY.

TITLE.

THE GOSPEL.—'Gospel' means 'Good Tidings,' or 'Good News.' Each of the Gospels is a Life or History of our Lord Jesus Christ: and to tell of Him is to tell the best tidings the world has ever heard. For it is to tell of God, the everlasting Son, leaving His eternal glory, to be born and to live and to die as Man, that He might "save His "people from their sins."

ACCORDING TO ST. MATTHEW.—That is, as St. Matthew records it. Each of the four Evangelists (or Gospel-writers) tells his story differently from the others. Each tells it after his own fashion, in his own words, and for his own purpose; and yet each, most surely, only as he was "moved by the Holy Ghost," or as that Divine Comforter brought to his remembrance the things which Jesus had spoken. According to Christ's promise, the Holy Spirit led them "into all "truth."

St. Matthew had been a publican, or tax-gatherer, and was called by our Lord from his place of business, as the fishermen were from their ships and nets (See ix. 9.). He is called Levi by St. Mark and St. Luke. Probably Levi was his former name, and he was named Matthew when he became a disciple of Christ. He was one of the twelve Apostles, and thus himself saw and heard most of what he relates.

St. Matthew's Gospel has been universally held to be the oldest of the four. The exact date of it is not known, but it was probably written not many years after the Ascension of our Lord (See Introduction to St. Luke.). It is almost certain that St. Matthew wrote his Gospel

first in Hebrew (that is, in the language spoken by the Jews of his time. See on St. John i. 42. *note*), but that the Greek version which we possess was made, either by the Evangelist himself, or under his direction, very shortly afterwards. Greek was known by all well-educated people in those days, which may have been the reason why the original Hebrew Gospel was lost in early times. St. Matthew wrote his Gospel firstly for the Jews, which was the reason of its being first written in Hebrew. Jewish customs and expressions are not explained, as in the other Gospels: the Scriptures of the Old Testament are very largely quoted: the Jewish teachers are made the subject of many discourses: and Christ is set forth with great distinctness as the King of the Jews.

The four Living Creatures seen by Ezekiel (See Ezek. i. & x.), and by St. John are supposed by many ancient writers to be emblems or symbols of the four Evangelists (But see on Rev. iv.), although with some difference of opinion as to the application of the several emblems. These expositors appear agreed thus far, "that the Lion "signifies what is kingly; the Man what is human; the Ox what "is sacerdotal (priestly) and sacrificial; the Eagle what is spiritual "and Divine" (*Is. Williams.*). The difficulty is to decide which of the Gospels bear these several characters most strikingly. All are agreed that the Eagle represents St. John with his heavenly flight of language. Perhaps it is best (although a different order has been popularly adopted) to follow St. Augustine and other high authorities in assigning the Lion to St. Matthew, as setting forth the royal character and the kingdom of Christ; the Man to St. Mark, as setting forth Christ in His human character; and the Ox (or Calf) to St. Luke, as setting forth the atonement and sacrifice of Christ.

The Collect for St. Matthew's Day.

O Almighty God, who by Thy blessed Son didst call Matthew from the receipt of custom to be an Apostle and Evangelist; Grant us grace to forsake all covetous desires, and inordinate love of riches, and to follow the same Thy Son Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen.

CHAPTER I.

1 *The genealogy of Christ from Abraham to Joseph.* 18 *He was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary when she was espoused to Joseph.* 19 *The angel satisfieth the misdeeming thoughts of Joseph, and interpreteth the names of Christ.*

THE book of the generation of Jesus Christ, [a] the Son of David, [b] the Son of Abraham.

2 [c] Abraham begat Isaac; and [d] Isaac begat Jacob; and [e] Jacob begat Judas and his brethren;

[a] Ps. 132. 11. Isai. 11. 1. Jer. 23. 5. ch. 22. 42. John 7. 42. Acts 2. 30. & 13. 23. Rom. 1. 3.
[b] Gen. 12. 3. & 22. 18. Gal. 3. 16.
[c] Gen. 21. 2, 3.
[d] Gen. 25. 26.
[e] Gen. 29. 35.

CHAPTER I.

1—17. Genealogy.

St. Luke iii. 23—38.

1. "The generation of Jesus Christ." Learned men have spent much time and care over the genealogy of our Lord, and it is well for such persons to study it, that they may explain (so far as is possible) the difficulties which are found in it. We need not perplex ourselves with these. We are content to believe that, if we had before us all the facts of the case, all would be clear. The Jews were so very careful and particular in preserving their genealogies that we can hardly doubt those we have in the gospels were taken from well-known, and probably public, records.

"Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham." The name 'Jesus' we shall speak of farther on. 'Christ' signifies 'anointed'; and it has been often pointed out that under this title we may learn to look upon our Lord in His three offices of King, Priest, and Prophet, to each of which men were consecrated by anointing. The words "the "Son of David, the Son of Abraham," give the key to the whole genealogy. All allow that St. Matthew wrote his gospel chiefly for the *Jewish*

NOTES.

1. "*The Book.*" This does not mean the whole Gospel, but only the genealogy contained in verses 1 to 17.

"*The generation.*" It may be well to point out that this genealogy, from David downwards, is very different from that given in St. Luke iii., only two names being the same in both. It is impossible to enter here into the many points which require explanation. The reader who wishes to learn more about them is referred to larger commentaries. It may however be here stated that both genealogies probably belong to Joseph, as the *legal* (though not the *real*) father of Jesus. There seems no foundation for supposing (as some have done) that one is Joseph's line, and the other the Virgin Mary's. We know, in other ways, that the mother of our Lord was of David's line (See on St. Luke i. 32. & ii. 5.). What the Jews would require would be to be shown that Jesus was so according to the *legal* way of tracing family descent. It is probable that St. Matthew traces the *Royal* descent of Christ, through the succession of kings, and their legal heirs; while St. Luke traces the *Human* lineage of Christ in a more direct natural order. But, in either case, we are not to suppose that in every link there is the natural connection of father and son. The word "begat" in St. Matthew is used in a wide sense, and is much the same as 'was succeeded by,' the succession being sometimes by adoption, and sometimes with the omission of several generations. In St. Luke too the word "son" is not in the Greek (in which St. Luke wrote) at all throughout the list of names.

f Gen. 38. 27, &c. g Ruth 4. 18, &c. 1 Chron. 2. 5, 9, &c.

3 and f Judas begat Phares and Zara of Thamar; and g Phares begat Esrom; and Esrom begat Aram;
4 and Aram begat Aminadab; and Aminadab begat Naasson; and Naasson begat Salmon;
5 and Salmon begat Booz of Rachab; and Booz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse;
6 and h Jesse begat David the king; and i David the king begat Solomon of her *that had been the wife* of Urias;

h 1 Sam. 16. 1. & 17. 12. i 2 Sam. 12. 24.

k 1 Chron. 3. 10, &c.

7 and k Solomon begat Roboam; and Roboam begat Abia; and Abia begat Asa;
8 and Asa begat Josaphat; and Josaphat begat Joram; and Joram begat Ozias;
9 and Ozias begat Joatham; and Joatham begat Achaz; and Achaz begat Ezekias;

l 2 Kin. 20. 21. 1 Chr. 3. 13.

10 and l Ezekias begat Manasses; and Manasses begat Amon; and Amon begat Josias;

2 Some read, *Josias begat Jakim, and Jakim begat Jechonias.* m See 1 Chro. 3. 15, 16. n 2 Kin. 24. 14, 15, 16. & 25. 11. 2 Chron. 36. 10, 20. Jer. 27. 20. & 39. 9. & 52. 11, 15, 28, 29, 30. Dan. 1. 2. o 1 Chron. 3. 17, 19. p Ezra 3. 2. & 5. 2. Neh. 12. 1. Hag. 1. 1.

11 2 m and Josias begat Jechonias and his brethren, about the time they were n carried away to Babylon:
12 and after they were brought to Babylon, o Jechonias begat Salathiel; and Salathiel begat p Zorobabel;
13 and Zorobabel begat Abiud; and Abiud begat Eliakim; and Eliakim begat Azor;
14 and Azor begat Sadoc; and Sadoc begat Achim; and Achim begat Eliud;
15 and Eliud begat Eleazar; and Eleazar begat Matthan; and Matthan begat Jacob;
16 and Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.

Christians. What a Jew would at once require in the Messiah would be the fulfilment of ancient prophecy. He would know that the promised Christ was to be of the family both of Abraham and of David, and this the Evangelist shews that Jesus Christ was.

3. "**Thamar.**" Besides the Virgin Mary, only four women are named in this genealogy, Thamar, Rahab, Ruth, and Bath-sheba. Of these, three were guilty of special sin, and two were Gentiles. Why are these four named, while so many greater and holier women are passed by? Perhaps to shew that the holy Son of God despised not a sin-stained race, but came to join Himself to, and to be the Friend of, sinners. Perhaps to fore-shadow the call of the Gentiles, for He who had not a faultless Jewish pedigree, but numbered in His ancestry strangers to the house of Israel, in like manner came to be "a light to lighten the Gentiles," as well as to be "the glory of" God's "people Israel."

17 So all the generations from Abraham to David *are* fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon *are* fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ *are* fourteen generations.

18 ¶ Now the [r]birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as His mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child [s]of the Holy Ghost.

The fifth year before the common date called Anno Domini 1.

[r] Luke 1. 27.

[s] Luke 1. 35.

19 Then Joseph her husband, being a just *man*, and not willing [t]to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily.

[t] Deut. 24. 1.

18—25. Birth of Jesus.

St. Luke ii. 1—7.

18. "The birth of Jesus Christ." This is more fully related by St. Luke, who records the Angel's visit to the Virgin Mary to announce the high honour in store for her, the place and circumstances of the birth, and the vision of the shepherds.

"Espoused," betrothed, or promised in marriage. Our Lord's birth was a miracle. He was born of a pure Virgin, and had no human father. Possibly He was born of a *betrothed* virgin, in order that she might have a friend and protector in her future husband. The betrothal was considered so sacred among the Jews that the names "husband" and "wife" were given to the betrothed before the actual marriage, as we see by the next verse, in which Joseph is called "husband," though he was only *future* husband of the Virgin Mary.

19. "Just," that is, good and upright, a strict observer of the law.

"Privily." Had Joseph made her "a public example," she might have been condemned to death by stoning. He wished probably either to part from her by secret agreement between themselves, or to give her a writing of divorcement, which would be the more correct course under the Jewish law, the bond of betrothal being accounted almost as sacred and binding as that of marriage itself. It seems to be quite in accordance with the modest thoughtful retiring character of the holy Virgin,

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16. "*Jacob.*" In St. Luke Heli is the name given to the father of Joseph. This difficulty we have no means of solving. Possibly the two names may belong to the same person, as Moses' father-in-law was called both Jethro and Raguel; or they may belong to two brothers, one of whom, according to Jewish law, may have married the widow of the other, in which case the offspring of such marriage might be spoken of as belonging to either brother; or a generation may be omitted in either account.

17. This is allowed to be a very difficult verse. A good many generations are omitted in the list after David's time. We must therefore not understand "fourteen" to be given as the exact number of the real generations, but only as the number of those named by the Evangelist. In fact the number is probably only a help to the memory, as though the writer had said, 'Thus we may count up four-'teen names in each of the three great 'periods.'

20 But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not
u Luke 1. 35. to take unto thee Mary thy wife: u for That which
2 Gr. *begotten.* is 2 conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.
x Luke 1. 31. 21 x And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou
3 That is, *Saviour,* Heb. shalt call His name 3 JESUS: for y He shall save
y Acts 4. 12. & 5. 31. & 13. 23, 38. His people from their sins.

22 Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying,

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that she should not have told even her betrothed husband of the wonderful message that had been brought to her by the angel Gabriel.

20. "**In a dream.**" The mystery of Christ's holy Incarnation was announced by the angel openly to Mary; to Joseph in a dream. God confirms His revelations by such evidence as is sufficient for faith. Possibly it was needful that so startling an announcement should be made in a most clear and unmistakeable manner to Mary, who was chiefly concerned with it. A dream was sufficient to set at rest Joseph's doubts, especially as that dream would at once be confirmed by Mary herself. Perhaps we may thus learn not to expect a miracle to be wrought to prove to us that, of which God has given us already enough proof to satisfy a humble and faithful mind. For those who have "Moses and "the prophets" God will not send "one from the dead." Yet He will open a way to settle our doubts, if we look humbly to Him, and ask to be taught in *His* way, and not in our own.

"**Son of David.**" Joseph is thus addressed to remind him of the promise to the house of David, to which both he and Mary belonged. To him was to be given the high privilege of being closely related (though not in the flesh) to Him who is "the Root and Offspring of David."

21. "**JESUS.**" This holy and most blessed name, this name "which is "above every name," and at which "every knee should bow," signifies 'God the Saviour.' It is only the Greek form of the word Joshua; and indeed Joshua is called "Jesus" in two places of the New Testament (Acts vii. 45, and Heb. iv. 8.). Joshua is a striking type of Christ, as leading his people to the conquest of their enemies, and to an inheritance in their promised land. In old times God was known by names of power and majesty: now he is revealed by a name of love and mercy. The Jew of old dared not take the awful name of Jehovah within his lips; now all nations learn to love the name of love, "Jesus."

"**He shall save His people from their sins.**" Not from the *punishment* of their sins only. This is a very narrow and imperfect view to take of the salvation spoken of. Jesus saves from the *power* of sin as well as from its punishment. He saves us from sin itself here, as well as from the fruits of sin hereafter. His is a present, as well as a future, salvation.

22. "**That it might be fulfilled.**" This expression is often used in

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20. "*Thy wife,*" that is, thy espoused, or betrothed, wife;—"wife" being here used in the same sense as "husband" in the verse before.

23 **Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a Son, and** [2] **they shall call His name Emmanuel,** which being interpreted is, God with us. Isai. 7. 14.

[2] Or, *His name shall be called.*

24 Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife:

25 and knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn Son: and he called His name [a] JESUS.

[a] Ex. 13. 2. Luke 2. 21.

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bringing forward ancient prophecy. We are not to understand it as stating that God's purpose in bringing about the great events of the Gospel was only in order that the prophecies uttered long before might be fulfilled. We know that God purposed the events before He inspired the prophecies. But still *one* purpose in the events, or rather perhaps in the manner and circumstances of their being brought to pass, was the accomplishment of that which had been foretold, and the witness thus given to God's word. We must also beware of thinking that any action was done by the immediate doer of it with the object of fulfilling prophecy. When we are told that the soldiers at the Crucifixion "parted His garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which "was spoken by the prophet" (xxvii. 35.), we are not to suppose that they did this in order that the words of David might be fulfilled, but that God designed that their act should be the fulfilment of the words, just as He designed that the words should be a prophecy of the act. When however we read that "Jesus, knowing that all things were now "accomplished, *that the scripture might be fulfilled*, saith, I thirst", the expression may be taken more literally, since it appears in that case as though the fulfilment of the prophecy were a reason for the utterance of the words (See on St. John xix. 28.).

23. This great prophecy, like many others, had its lesser and more immediate fulfilment. But prophecy, even when in a literal sense fulfilled at once, has also undoubtedly its wider deeper farther fulfilment. That the prophets themselves felt this we know from St. Peter's words (1 St. Peter i. 11, 12.), for he tells us they searched the meaning of their own prophecies, and knew that they belonged to the times of the Gospel.

"**Emmanuel.**" This name was not actually given to our Lord, nor was there any need. It is simply that which men call Him, and acknowledge Him to be,—"God with us"—God Incarnate—the Word made flesh, and dwelling among us. The same may be said of the titles of our Lord in the 9th chapter of Isaiah.

25. "**Firstborn.**" This word by no means implies that the mother of our Lord ever had other children. The first child of a Jewish parent bore the title from birth, whether followed by others or not. It is the

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23. The original prophecy of Isaiah (vii. 14.), delivered about 750 years before the Birth of our Lord, foretold, first of all, that deliverance and peace and plenty should be given to the land of Judah, then oppressed by the kings of Israel and Syria, before one who was at that time a virgin could bear a child, and that child could grow old enough to discern between good and evil. But the strange form and language of the prophecy would of themselves suggest that some greater and farther meaning was hidden under the words; as was truly the case.

CHAPTER II.

The fourth year before the common date called Anno Domini 1. 1st Year of our Lord's life.

1 *The wise men out of the east are directed to Christ by a star.* 11 *They worship Him, and offer their presents.* 14 *Joseph fleeth into Egypt, with Jesus and His mother.* 16 *Herod slayeth the children:* 20 *himself dieth.* 23 *Christ is brought back again into Galilee to Nazareth.*

NOW when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa in the days of Herod the king, behold, there
[a] Gen. 10. 30. & 25. 6. 1 Kin. 4. 30. came wise men [a] from the east to Jerusalem,

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ancient belief of the Church that the Virgin Mary had no other child, and that those four who are called "brethren" of our Lord were either children of Joseph by a former marriage, or only near relatives, which the word would allow (See on xiii. 55.).

CHAPTER II.

The Visit of the Wise Men and the Flight into Egypt.

1. "Now when Jesus was born." This event—the coming in the flesh of the eternal Son of God—being the greatest the world has ever known, rightly do Christian nations number the years, as they pass, from it, as from a new creation,—a second birthday of the world. "The "year of our Lord" is counted from that of His birth.

"Bethlehem." For a fuller account of the birth of our Lord we must consult St. Luke's Gospel. We there learn how it came to pass, in the providence of God, that Jesus was born at Bethlehem. The word 'Bethlehem' means 'House of bread,' and, although it is not well to insist upon hidden meanings being *intended*, where we are not told so, yet it is perfectly lawful to dwell upon the thought that out of this 'House of bread' sprang He who was to be the "Bread of Life." Bethlehem was about six miles south of Jerusalem (See Map.).

"Herod the king." This was Herod the Great, who had rebuilt the Temple at Jerusalem with great magnificence. Though retaining the title, and much of the power, of king, he owed his throne to the Romans, who at this time were masters of all the known world. He was noted for his cruelty and violence, having murdered several of his own family. He was now an old man, and died soon after our Lord's Birth, so that we must not confuse him with the other Herods, his descendants, of whom we read in other places.

"Wise Men," or 'magi,' as the original word is, and as they are often called. From this word we have the English words 'magic' and 'magician,' but these magi were not magicians, but men of a learned class in the East, noted for their knowledge of the stars.

"From the East." We do not know from what special country in

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1. "*Now when Jesus was born.*" Although our years are dated by numbering from the supposed year of our Lord's Birth, yet this has been found by careful research to be slightly inaccurate, our Lord having really been born four years earlier than the date from which we reckon. The practice of numbering the years from our Lord's Birth was not adopted for five hundred years after that time, so that it is easy to account for the error.

"*There came wise men.*" In comparing

2 saying, [b]Where is He that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen [c]His star in the east, and are come to worship Him.

[b] Luke 2. 11.
[c] Num. 24. 17. Isai. 60. 3.

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the East they came. It may have been from Chaldea (Abraham's native country), or Persia, or Arabia.

2. "**Where is He &c.?**" It is a common idea that the star led the wise men all their journey through. This seems hardly to agree with the history. Had it been so, why should they have had to make enquiries at Jerusalem? They probably came to Jerusalem, because it was the royal city, and they thought that they would be sure to hear there about the "King of the Jews," if not actually to find Him there. It may be, however, that the star appeared each night, and also that Jerusalem would lie in the most convenient route to Bethlehem, and that the enquiries of the wise men were made there, because, by the appearance or position of the star, they knew they had nearly reached the end of their journey.

"**His star.**" What this was we cannot tell, but it seems to have been some strange and striking appearance in the sky, which God inspired them to receive as a token that the expected Deliverer was come. Probably these wise men knew enough of the Jewish prophecies to know that the Messiah was to come. We must not forget that some of the most striking prophecies of Christ, especially Daniel's, which names the very time of His coming, were written while the Israelites were captives in the East. The writings of so great a man as Daniel would probably be known to the people in whose land he was raised to such power, and who would (we may well suppose) have received from their forefathers the story of his wonderful deliverance from the den of lions. Perhaps also Balaam's still more ancient prophecy of the "Star" which was to come out of Jacob was known to them.

"**To worship Him.**" Plainly the wise men were enabled to see more of the "mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh" (1 Tim. iii. 16.), than was given to many others. They came to see the "King "of the Jews," but they must have known something of the truth that His Kingdom was "not of this world," else they would not have thought of worship. Worship is, in its very nature, an adoration paid by man to God.

St. Matthew's Gospel with St. Luke's we find that the former omits the Purification and Presentation in the Temple recorded by the latter (St. Luke ii. 22—38.), while the latter omits the visit of the wise men, the murder of the Innocents, and the flight into Egypt—in short, the whole contents of the present chapter. The Purification having taken place, as we know, forty days after the Birth of our Lord (this being fixed by the Law), the question arises, In what part of St. Luke's account are we to introduce the events of this chapter? There is some difference of opinion on this point, but on the whole it seems the simplest way to understand the events of St. Matthew ii. as falling in between the 38th and 39th verses of St. Luke ii. It will be at once observed that this places the visit of the wise men much later than the Epiphany (January 6.), the day on which it is kept in memory by the Church. But this is of the less importance since it does not seem that it was ever intended to affirm that the Epiphany is the actual day of the arrival of the wise men. In very early times the day was frequently spoken of as kept in memory of our Lord's Baptism, and, when it became more closely connected with the visit of the wise men, it was more because it was a most fitting season in which to celebrate this event, following in natural order after Christ-

3 When Herod the king had heard *these things*, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

d 2 Chr. 36. 14. 4 And when he had gathered all d the chief priests
e 2 Chr. 34. 13. and e scribes of the people together, f he demanded of
f Mal. 2. 7. them where Christ should be born.

5 And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judæa: for thus it is written by the prophet,

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3. "He was troubled." Probably with the fear of a rival to his own family in the kingdom. The same fear would disturb "all Jerusa-"lem," for, however bad and hateful king Herod might be, he would be sure to have many whose interest it would be to support him, and even to others the enquiry about another "King of the Jews" would naturally cause great excitement. It seems however that the king, and others who heard the words of the wise men, understood that the "King of the "Jews" was none other than the promised Christ, as we see by Herod's question in the next verse. What they did *not* understand was the nature of that kingdom of which Christ was born the King.

4. "Chief priests and scribes of the people." Properly speaking, there was only one Chief- or High-Priest, but under the Romans and Herod there had been many changes in this office, and there may have been several at the same time claiming a right to it. Possibly the "chief priests" may include such as had formerly served the office, who may have acted as assistants to the lawful high priest; or the term may include the heads of the several "courses" of priests (See 1 Chron. xxiv. 6.). The "Scribes" (literally 'writers') were the copyists and teachers of the law, and probably Levites.

5. "In Bethlehem of Judæa." The learned men at Jerusalem readily answered Herod's question as to "where Christ should be born." The prophecy of Micah was familiar to them, and they understood it rightly. Had they gone on to the next words, which describe the Governor, who was to come out of Bethlehem, as One "whose goings forth have "been from of old, from everlasting," they might have discerned something more of His Divine character. It is ill for those who know where to find Christ, and can tell others where to find Him, but who never seek Him or find Him themselves.

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mas, than because the day was held to be the actual one on which the event occurred. (We may observe that the Holy Innocents' Day, in like manner, is plainly not intended to represent the actual day of the slaughter of the Innocents, being celebrated three days after Christmas-Day, and thus before the Epiphany, which in historical order it ought to follow.) It is certainly probable that the star appeared to the wise men in the East (that is, while *they* were in the East, for the star of course appeared to them Westward) at the very time of the Saviour's Birth. If so, it is also probable that the time of their visit would be later than the twelfth day after the Nativity, which would scarcely allow sufficient time for their long journey. The limit of two years, which Herod fixed, also seems to point to a somewhat later date for the visit of the wise men than is traditionally assigned to it (See *Note* on ver. 16.). Herod seems to have fixed the age in consequence of the information obtained from the wise men as to the time when the star appeared, as though he thought the appearance of the star would mark the time of the birth. Thus he would be likely to take a wider limit if he heard that the star had been first seen more than forty days (it may have been longer still) before, than if he heard it had been seen only twelve days. On the whole then it seems best and simplest to suppose that the visit of the wise men took place at some period *after* the Purification and Presentation in the Temple.

6 [g]**And thou Bethlehem,** *in* **the land of Juda,** [g] John 7. 42.
art not the least among the princes of Juda: for
out of thee shall come a Governor, [h]**that shall** [h] Rev. 2. 27.
[2]**rule My people Israel.** Micah 5. 2. [2] Or, *feed.*

7 Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared.

8 And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young Child; and when ye have found *Him*, bring me word again, that I may come and worship Him also.

9 When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was.

10 When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

11 And when they were come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down, and worshipped Him: and when they had

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7. "What time." Possibly, as supposing that the star appeared at the very time of our Lord's Birth (But see *Note* on 1.).

10. "When they saw the star." That is, when they saw it stand still, and knew that their long and weary journey had not been in vain, but that now indeed they had found Him whom they had so longed to see.

11. "The house." Some think that from this word we may gather that, after the enrolment of names, for which the Virgin Mary and Joseph had visited Bethlehem, was over, and other strangers who came for the same purpose had left the place, they removed from the stable, in which they had first been sheltered, into some private lodging, or the house of a friend. This is the more probable if we find ourselves obliged to conclude that the visit of the wise men was later than the time at which we commemorate it in the Epiphany (See *Note* on 1.).

"They saw the young Child." Was the scene they beheld quite what they expected? There was no royal pomp or splendour, only a poor Jewish maiden with her little Child. This was the "King" whom they had come to worship. Surely their faith and obedience to God's teaching were very marvellous. It needed the awful darkness, and the

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6. The words here given differ a little from those in the book of Micah (v. 2.). The prophet says, "Thou Bethlehem "Ephratah, *though thou be little* among the "thousands of Judah, yet out of thee "shall He come forth unto Me that is to "be Ruler in Israel." The chief priests seem to understand it as saying that Bethlehem was "*not the least* among the "princes" (or chief cities) "of Judah." The difference is not great, for the prophet says that, although Bethlehem was then little, it should become very great. So that the chief priests do give the general meaning when they say Bethlehem is "not the least", meaning, 'among the 'greatest' of the cities of Judah. It was little in size; very great in honour.

opened their treasures, [i] they [3] presented unto Him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

12 And being warned of God [k] in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

13 And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying,

[i] Ps. 72. 10. Isai. 60. 6.
[3] Or, *offered.*
[k] ch. 1. 20.

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earthquake, and the opening graves, to make the Roman captain cry out, "Truly this was the Son of God." Yet these wise men saw only a little Babe and Its mother, and "fell down, and worshipped Him."

"Their treasures." Probably the "gold and frankincense and "myrrh" were the best things which their land produced. The wise men teach us thus to give of our best to the Lord. Even the outward gift is accepted by Him, if offered in faith and love, and as a sign and token of the heart's offering within. Some have loved to trace a special fitness in these offerings;—the gold, as a tribute paid to a King; the frankincense, as an emblem of worship to be paid to God; and the myrrh, as a witness to the death which the Saviour came to die, myrrh being used in the embalming of the dead.

How wonderful is the history of the wise men's journey! First of all, it is the first pledge and earnest of the call of the Gentiles (See on vi. 32.). The Jewish shepherds are the first to be brought to the Saviour; then these Gentile wise men. True, David prophecies, "I shall give Thee "the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the "earth for Thy possession" (Ps. ii. 8.); and Isaiah writes, "It is "a light thing that Thou shouldest be My Servant to raise up the "tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel; I will also "give Thee for a light to the Gentiles, that Thou mayest be My "salvation unto the end of the earth" (xlix. 6.); and again, "The "Gentiles shall come to Thy light, and kings to the brightness of Thy "rising" (lx. 3.); and in many other places is the call of the Gentiles foretold. But here we have their first-fruits. Here we see the first visible proof that God's blessings are no longer bounded by the limits of one nation, but are free to all mankind,—that in place of a national religion we have a Catholic—universal—Church. Surely to us Gentiles this should be a ground of great thankfulness. Then mark God's dealings with those whom He would bring to Christ. He leads them by the sign best fitted to win their obedience. The wise men were learned in the stars. By a star they are called and led. So to each one arises some new and strange thing from time to time, which, if he would watch and follow its guidance, would be his star in the East, leading him to the Saviour. It has too been well observed that, as the wise men were led by two things,—the star without, and the teaching of God within,—so are we led by two things,—the Bible without, which is "a light unto our "paths," and the Spirit of God within, which is the promised guide and strength of all the pilgrims who are travelling onward, hoping to see their Lord face to face. Then, again, how wonderful is the faith of the wise men. It was no dim faith which could trace God's guiding in the star; which could support them through their long and toilsome journey; which could lead them to see in the little child of a humble Jewish maiden their King and their God, and to fall down and worship Him.

Arise, and take the young Child and His mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him.

14 When he arose, he took the young Child and His mother by night, and departed into Egypt:

15 and was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, **Out of Egypt have I called My Son.** Hos. 11. 1.

16 Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men.

17 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying,

18 **In Rama was there a voice heard, lamen-**

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15. **"Out of Egypt have I called My Son."** Here we have one of the plainest and most striking instances of the double meaning which belongs to much of prophecy. These words, as written by Hosea, no doubt refer, in their first and simplest sense, to the bringing of the children of Israel out of Egypt by Moses. But, whether the prophet who spake them saw this or no, they bore a *future* meaning as well as a past, and were a prophecy of the calling out of Egypt of Him who was alone in the highest and truest sense God's Son.

16. **"Mocked."** So it must have seemed to Herod. It was not so in reality.

"All the children." From the Greek word in this place we find that it was all the *male* children only who were slain.

18. **"In Rama" &c.** These words again are an instance of the double meaning of prophecy, or rather perhaps of the deeper truth that all the Old Testament is full of Christ, and finds its highest and most perfect meaning in Him. The prophet Jeremiah speaks these words of the children of Israel being carried away into captivity to Babylon. On that sad journey they would pass near Rachel's grave, which was in the way from Bethel to Bethlehem, and so probably near to Ramah, which would be on that route, lying a little north of Jerusalem. Rachel is pictured by the prophet as rising from her grave and weeping, as she sees her children pass to the land of their captivity. She is now again pictured as weeping over the infant martyrs of Bethlehem. Rachel is a type of Jewish mothers. How frightful to the mothers of Bethlehem was

16. *"According to the time."* Certainly the age fixed by Herod, coupled with these words, which seem to imply that this limit of age was fixed in consequence of the time at which the star had appeared to the wise men, affords a strong reason for supposing that these events did not take place so soon after the birth of our Lord as is commonly thought (See *Note* on ver. 1.). Still no doubt Herod would take a wide margin to make sure of his intended victim.

tation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping *for* her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not. Jer. 31. 15.

The fourth year before the date called Anno Domini 1.

19 But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt,

20 saying, Arise, and take the young Child and His mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young Child's life.

21 And he arose, and took the young Child and His mother, and came into the land of Israel.

22 But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judæa in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside [l]into the parts of Galilee:

23 and he came and dwelt in a city called [m]Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled [n]which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.

[l] ch. 3. 13. Luke 2. 39.
[m] John 1. 45.
[n] Judg. 13. 5. 1 Sam. 1. 11.

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this pitiless murder of their innocent children. Yet Rachel is comforted in the prophecy:—"Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes "from tears: for . . they shall come again from the land of the enemy. "And there is hope in thine end, saith the Lord, that thy children shall "come again to their own border." Surely the same comfort might be for the mothers of Bethlehem; for are not their little ones to come again from the land of the "last enemy," even death? And may not they have hope in their end to meet their lost children in the border of their eternal home? The Church keeps the memory of these murdered infants on the Innocents' Day. Does their fate seem to us sad and cruel? It was sad to the weeping mothers. It was cruel in the merciless king. But to the little babes themselves surely it was very blessed. "These were re- "deemed from among men, being the first-fruits unto God, and to the "Lamb" (Rev. xiv. 4.). Martyrs in act, though not in will, they were taken away from the evil to come, and they are "without fault before "the Throne of God" (Rev. xiv. 5.), through Him in whose behalf they died.

19. "When Herod was dead." This wicked tyrant died directly after his crowning act of malice and cruelty in the murder of the Innocents.

22. "Thither." That is, probably, to Bethlehem, which the holy family would naturally desire to make their home after the wonderful events which connected them so closely with it.

23. "He shall be called a Nazarene." These words are not to be found in any of the Prophets. Nazareth was a place much despised among the Jews, so that "Nazarene" was a term of reproach; and some have thought that St. Matthew here refers to the general prophecies of our Lord's lowly and despised condition. Others (with perhaps more probability) seek the prophecy in the various passages which speak of Christ as the "Branch," such as that in which He is spoken of as a Branch out of the root of Jesse (Isa. xi. 1.). The name 'Nazareth' is derived from the Hebrew word which signifies 'branch', and means 'the city of branches'.

CHAPTER III.

A. D. 26. 30th Year of our Lord's life.

1 John preacheth: his office: life, and baptism. 7 He reprehendeth the Pharisees, 13 and baptizeth Christ in Jordan.

IN those days came John the Baptist, preaching [a] in the wilderness of Judæa,

[a] Josh. 14. 10.

2 and saying, Repent ye: for [b] the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

[b] Dan. 2. 44. ch. 4. 17. & 10. 7.

So that perhaps it is here meant that, when Jesus was popularly called a Nazarene, that is, one belonging to the 'city of branches,' it was a fitting name for Him whom the prophets call the 'Branch'. It is possible that the words may be taken from some lost prophecy, or some unwritten prophecy which had been handed down by tradition among the Jews.

CHAPTER III.

1—12. The Preaching of John the Baptist.

St. Mark i. 1—8. St. Luke iii. 1—18.

1. **"John the Baptist."** The fore-runner of Christ, prophesied of by Malachi, the last of the prophets, under the name of Elias, because in his teaching, as well as in his character, he was to resemble the great prophet Elijah. The Angel prophesied to his father Zacharias, before his birth, that he should go before the Lord "in the spirit and power of Elias."

"Wilderness of Judæa." This was the wild and thinly peopled district near the river Jordan and the "hill country of Judæa."

2. **"Repent ye."** The preacher of repentance must first come before Christ is received as the Saviour. Repentance is the first step towards Christ. Mark how this cry, "Repent ye," is ever the first to be uttered. Here it is the preaching of John the Baptist. We learn that Jesus Himself preached, saying, "The kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, "and believe the Gospel" (St. Mark i. 15.). Also we find that the Apostles, after their solemn call and commission, "went out and preached "that men should repent" (St. Mark vi. 12.). And when the Holy Ghost was given on the Day of Pentecost, and the people were "pricked in their "heart" at St. Peter's preaching, and asked, "Men and brethren, what "shall we do?" the Apostle's first word in answer is, "Repent" (Acts ii. 38.). And what then is this all-important thing, *Repentance?* It is not mere sorrow, however deep and sincere. This is only the beginning of repentance, for St. Paul says, "Godly sorrow *worketh repentance*" (2 Cor. vii. 10.). Also the word used in the New Testament for 'repentance' means a good deal more than 'godly sorrow.' It means a thorough change of heart; a change from sin to godliness, from evil thoughts and desires to good, from earth to heaven. This is no light change. It is often called 'conversion,' which means a turning round,—a complete and entire change. But, according to our present use of the words, repentance is a wider word than conversion: for conversion generally means the

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1. "*In those days.*" This does not mean directly after what was last recorded, but probably has reference to the dwelling at Nazareth, which seems to have been our Lord's home until the time here spoken of. For the accurate date of "those days," see St. Luke iii. 1.

"*John the Baptist.*" St. Luke begins his Gospel with a full account of the birth of John the Baptist, and his connection with our Saviour.

A. D. 26. 3 For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, **The voice of one crying in the**
c Luke 1. 76. **wilderness, c Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight.** Isai. 40. 3.

d 2 Kin. 1. 8. Zech. 13. 4. 4 And the same John d had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his
e Lev. 11. 22. meat was e locusts and f wild honey.
f 1 Sam. 14. 25, 26. 5 Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judæa, and all the region round about Jordan,

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turning to God after a long course of sin; while repentance is used for the turning to God after *any* sin. Thus conversion is that which the more hardened sinner needs. But *all* need repentance, for the best have daily sins and shortcomings to repent of.

"The kingdom of heaven." This expression is used only by St. Matthew, but means the same as the 'kingdom of God,' as used by the other Evangelists. It is generally used to signify the kingdom of Christ on earth, the kingdom of the gospel, the church of Christ. This is indeed a heavenly kingdom, for though it is now set up on the earth, yet its nature, its purpose, its powers, and its end, are "of heaven." That it is used to signify Christ's kingdom on earth can be seen most plainly by the various parables in which our Saviour likens the kingdom of heaven to such things as of necessity belong to this present time. (See especially the parables in the thirteenth chapter of this Gospel.) The time for the setting up of that heavenly kingdom was at hand. The King Himself was come, and was about to receive and establish His kingdom. Thus preached the forerunner, he who, as Jesus said (xi. 11.), was the greatest of those who went before Him, and yet "the least in the kingdom of "heaven is greater than he." That is, the least in the Church of Christ —the humblest Christian—has higher privileges and blessings than the greatest of those that were under the old covenant.

4. **"Camel's hair."** This would make coarse rough clothing. We may observe the account of Elijah (2 Kings i. 8.) which describes him as "an hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins."

"Locusts." There is some difference of opinion as to the meaning of this word, some understanding it in the common sense as meaning the insect, and others understanding it of a sort of bean which is said to have been called by the same name. There seems no good reason for not receiving the commoner sense of the word in this place, for locusts were commonly eaten in the East, and they are expressly permitted to be eaten by the Jews in the book of Leviticus. The locust is like a very large grasshopper, of a red brown or yellow colour, and appears frequently in such enormous flights as to darken the sky in passing, and to destroy every green thing for miles in extent where it alights. The prophet Joel gives a most vivid description of the ravages of the locust, as a type of the judgments God would inflict on His rebellious people through the ravages of their enemies. St. John the Baptist's fare was coarse and common as his raiment. He came "neither eating nor drinking" (xi. 18.).

5. **"All."** This certainly means a great number, but probably is to be understood rather of persons flocking from *all parts* of Judæa, than of all the inhabitants coming.

6 [1] and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. A. D. 26.

7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, [m] O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from [n] the wrath to come?

8 Bring forth therefore fruits [2] meet for repentance:

9 and think not to say within yourselves, [o] We have Abraham to *our* father: for I say unto you,

[1] Acts 19. 4, 18.
[m] ch. 12. 34. & 23. 33.
[n] Rom. 5. 9. 1 Thes. 1. 10.
[2] Or, *answerable to amendment of life.*
[o] John 8. 33, 39. Acts 13. 26. Rom. 4. 1, 11, 16.

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6. "Baptized . . confessing." Baptism was already known among the Jews, it being their practice to baptize proselytes, or converts from heathenism (See on xxiii. 15. St. John iii. 5.). It would therefore naturally appear to them a fit emblem of the cleansing of the soul from its former sins, and of the beginning of a new and holy life. Those who came to John's baptism confessed their sins, openly it seems, as a pledge of their sincere repentance, and in their baptism sealed that repentance by an open act and profession.

7. "Pharisees and Sadducees." The Pharisees were the largest and most powerful of the religious sects or parties among the Jews. They formed what to outward eyes was the religious world. They were strict observers of the law, and had added to God's law many human traditions, which they observed no less strictly. They made a great show of religion. They were, however, as a class, exceedingly proud and self-righteous. Thus they are often denounced as "hypocrites", inasmuch as they pretended to be devout and holy, while suffering the deadly sins of pride and uncharitableness to reign in their hearts. The Sadducees were very unlike the Pharisees. They strongly denied the existence of any Divine truths or commands handed down by tradition, and looked to the Law of Moses as containing all that they were bound to believe. Thus, not finding in that Law any statement of the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, they refused to believe this truth, and indeed they denied not only the resurrection, but also the existence of any future life at all, and of the spiritual world. Their religion was mere morality. Their creed was a barren belief in God. They were half unbelievers. As a sect they were not so important as the Pharisees, and they do not seem to have been active in spreading their doctrines. They completely died out after the destruction of Jerusalem.

"O generation of vipers." St. John the Baptist would not have thus spoken, if these Pharisees and Sadducees had come with true repentance to be baptized. Many probably came out of mere curiosity to hear him. We read that "the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of "God against themselves, being *not baptized of him*" (St. Luke vii. 30.). And again, our Lord charges it against the "chief priests and elders," who were partly Pharisees and partly Sadducees, that when John came, they "believed him not," and even when they saw others believing, they "repented not afterward, that they might believe him" (xxi. 32.).

8. "Fruits." "The tree is known by its fruits." And the only proof we can give of our repentance is by our lives and actions. If these are not changed, the heart cannot be changed.

9. "We have Abraham to our father." This was the pride and

A. D. 26. that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

p ch. 7. 19. Luke 13. 7, 9. John 15. 6.
q John 1. 15, 26, 33. Acts 1. 5. & 11. 16. & 19. 4.
r Isai. 4. 4. & 44. 3. Mal. 3. 2. Acts 2. 3, 4. 1 Cor. 12. 13.
s Mal. 3. 3.

10 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: [p]therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

11 [q]I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: [r]He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and *with* fire:

12 [s]whose fan *is* in His hand, and He will

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boast and trust of the Jew. As a son of Abraham he counted himself entitled to the love and favour of God.

"Of these stones." That is, the stones lying by the banks of the river. The meaning of this passage is, that God can raise up a spiritual seed to Abraham when and where He will. Abraham was the father of the *faithful*. The *faithful* therefore are his true children: truer than those who are only his children after the flesh. And these words are indeed fulfilled when God softens the stony heart of the unbeliever, and makes him one of the *faithful*.

11. "He shall baptize." Not in person, but by His ministers. "Jesus "Himself baptized not, but His disciples." Yet their act was His act; for He gave the blessing.

"With the Holy Ghost, and with fire." No doubt these words were most fully and clearly fulfilled in the wonderful gift of the Day of Pentecost, as we may gather from our Lord's own words before His Ascension, "John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized "with the Holy Ghost not many days hence" (Acts i. 5.). Still they seem also to have a wider meaning, and to point to the great superiority of Christian baptism over that of John the Baptist. Christ gives the Holy Spirit to those who are baptized in His name as their Guide and Comforter; and that Holy Spirit sanctifies and purifies those who are led by Him, as with a refining fire. God Himself revealed to St. John the Baptist that upon whom he should "see the Spirit descending and remain-"ing on Him, the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost" (St. John i. 33.). And we can hardly think that this general description of our Lord, as "He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost," referred solely to the great gift of the Day of Pentecost. Rather that wonderful gift was the pledge and first-fruits of a *continuous* gift to the Church, of which Christian Baptism is the seal and confirmation. The promise, fulfilled so wonderfully on the Day of Pentecost, was, as St. Peter most plainly declares, not for those only to whom it was then given, but for their children also, and for all whom God should call. And surely in Baptism God calls us (See on St. John iii. 5.).

12. "Whose fan." This means the winnowing fan, and the "floor"

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10. "*The axe*" *&c.* This verse should be compared with the parable of the Barren Fig-tree, in St. Luke xiii., with the parable of the Vine, in St. John xv., and with the history of the Fig-tree which withered away at our Lord's word, in St. Matt. xxi. and St. Mark xi.

12. "*Whose fan*" *&c.* This should be compared with the parables of the Tares and Wheat, and the Draw-net, in St. Matt. xiii, and with those of the Ten Virgins, and the Sheep and Goats, in St. Matt. xxv.

throughly purge His floor, and gather His wheat into the garner; but He will [t] burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. A. D. 26. [t] Mal. 4. 1. ch. 13. 30.

13 ¶ Then cometh Jesus [u] from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. A. D. 27. 31st Year of our Lord's life. [u] ch. 2. 22.

14 But John forbad Him, saying, I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest Thou to me?

15 And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer *it to be so* now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered Him.

16 And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw [x] the Spirit [x] Isai. 11. 2. & 42. 1. John 1. 32, 33.

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is the threshing-floor. The image is taken from hand winnowing, and Jesus is represented as a man who will thoroughly cleanse the threshing-floor, severing every single grain of true wheat from the worthless chaff, and storing the former in his garner or barn. Though this severance will be fully and finally made at our Lord's second coming, yet it is, in truth, ever being made: for not only does Christ's all-searching eye ever discern clearly between the wheat and the chaff on His floor, but also every one of His dealings with His people, every mercy, every trial, every call, every warning, does in effect prove and show who are wheat and who are chaff (See on St. Luke xxii. 31.).

13—17. The Baptism of Jesus.

St. Mark i. 9—11. St. Luke iii. 21, 22.

14. "**John forbad Him.**" Knowing Him to be One holier and greater than himself. Though, as His kinsman, he was probably acquainted with Him, yet he did not know Him in His divine character and office till the sign was given him in the visible descent of the Holy Ghost (See on St. John i. 33.). Possibly the Baptist's personal acquaintance with Jesus was slight; for not only were their homes far apart, the one in the "hill "country" of Judæa (St. Luke i. 39.), and the other at Nazareth in Galilee; but also St. John appears to have led a solitary life "in the "deserts" for some time before "his shewing unto Israel" (St. Luke i. 80.).

15. "**For thus it becometh us**" &c. Our Lord here gives the reason why He submitted to be baptized, and that with the baptism which was "for the remission of sins." He must "fulfil all righteousness," that is, all the requirements of the law. But why? Because He made Himself "*sin for us*," and He needs must fulfil all that sin required:—firstly, that He might entirely put Himself in our place, and bear our sins in His own person; and, secondly, that He might set us an example of perfect obedience.

16. "**He saw.**" It seems as though this sight was only manifested to Jesus Himself and the Baptist. Possibly none others were present. It is a great mystery that the Holy Spirit should thus descend upon the Son of God. We cannot suppose that He, who was God and Man, was lacking that Holy Spirit before. Being "conceived by the Holy Ghost" He was from His very conception sanctified and anointed with that Divine

A.D. 27. of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him:

y John 12. 28.
z Ps. 2. 7. Isai. 42. 1. ch. 12. 18. & 17. 5. Luke 9. 35. Eph. 1. 6. Col. 1. 13. 2 Pet. 1. 17.

17 y and lo a voice from heaven, saying, z This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

Spirit. Nay, in His Divine nature He was ever one with the Holy Ghost, even as He was one with the Father. But as He humbled Himself to man's nature, and suffered Himself, as Man, to "*increase* in wisdom," and to "*wax* strong in spirit," so we may believe that in His Baptism His Human Nature received a new and manifest anointing of the Divine Spirit for the work which lay before Him. By this anointing He was revealed to be the "Christ," that is the 'Anointed' (See on i. 1.). See too how our Lord, in His first sermon at Nazareth, explains of Himself the words of Isaiah, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, "because He hath anointed Me" (St. Luke iv. 18. See also on St. John iii. 34.).

"Like a dove." There can be little doubt that the actual form of a dove, though possibly of light or fire, was manifest to the eyes of the Saviour and the Baptist. Some have wished to explain this simply of the movement of descent, as though it were stated that the Holy Ghost descended on Christ, *as* a dove might alight on the ground. This is certainly not the plain and natural meaning of the words.

17. "Lo a voice." Observe here the actual manifestation to human senses of the separate existence of the Three Persons of the Holy Trinity. The Father's voice is heard from heaven. The Son is being baptized in the river Jordan. The Holy Ghost is seen, in the form of a dove, alighting upon Jesus. The Three Divine Persons are *mentioned* together in other places; as in St. Paul's words, "The grace of the Lord Jesus "Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be "with you all" (2 Cor. xiii. 14.); and by our Lord Himself, when He says, "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter" (St. John xiv. 16.):—but here They are not only mentioned together, but manifested together.

"This is My beloved Son." Mark how this acknowledgement of Jesus as *the Son* takes place at His Baptism. He was the Son before, even from everlasting. Yet now it is proclaimed. May we not in this see a pledge of our adoption as children of God in holy Baptism? Jesus is our great Head—the Representative of our race—*the Son of Man* (see on viii. 20.): and, just as in the descent of the Holy Ghost upon Him, we behold a pledge of the gift of the same Divine Spirit in our Baptism; so in the voice from heaven we receive a pledge of our own adoption to be children of God in the same Sacrament. God beholds each baptized child as a member of His beloved Son, and for that beloved Son's sake He says of it, 'This is My child.'

Our Church teaches us that God "by the baptism of His well-beloved "Son in the river Jordan, did sanctify water to the mystical washing "away of sin." And surely we may suppose that our blessed Lord, in submitting to be baptized, not only would fulfil all those legal observances, which are in sinful man acts of submission to God, and means of grace and righteousness, but also would hallow and ennoble the special rite of Baptism, which He afterwards exalted to be one of the two Sacraments of His Church (See on xxviii. 19.). By the visible descent of the Holy

CHAPTER IV.

A. D. 27.

1 *Christ fasteth, and is tempted.* 11 *The angels minister unto Him.* 13 *He dwelleth in Capernaum,* 17 *beginneth to preach.* 18 *calleth Peter, and Andrew,* 21 *James, and John,* 23 *and healeth all the diseased.*

THEN was Jesus led up of [a] the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

2 And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He was afterward an hungred.

[a] See 1 Kin. 18. 12. Ezek. 3. 14. & 8. 3. & 11. 1, 24. & 40. 2. & 43. 5. Acts 8. 39.

Spirit at the time of His Baptism, He would also teach us to look for the inward and spiritual grace, and especially for the blessed gift of the Holy Spirit, in the faithful use of the outward sign and ordinance. The Christian must be born again "of water and of the Spirit" (St. John iii. 5.). Let the baptized Christian be very watchful lest he fall from his "state of salvation" and grieve or quench that Blessed Spirit, by whose power alone he is born again, and by whose power alone he can live unto God. "By the sacrament of Baptism thou "wast made a Temple of the Holy Spirit: do not by evil deeds drive "away from thyself so great an Inmate, and subject thyself again to "the service of the devil" (*Leo the Great.*).

CHAPTER IV.

1—11. The Temptation.

St. Mark i. 12, 13. St. Luke iv. 1—13.

1. "Led up of the Spirit." That is, by the Holy Spirit, which had just descended on Him in His baptism. St. Mark speaks of the Spirit *driving* Jesus into the wilderness. Thus does the Son of God make Himself perfect Man, obeying, in His human nature, the command of the Divine Spirit within Him.

"To be tempted." "No sooner is our Lord out of the water of Bap-"tism than He is in the fire of temptation" (Bishop Hall.). The first great act of our Lord's public ministry is to do battle with the Tempter, and to conquer him. And this for three main reasons. 1. That He might cast down Satan's power by defeating him, thus binding him who was the "strong man armed" (See on xii. 29. & St. Luke xi. 21.). The second Adam conquers where the first falls; and in this conquest the promised Seed first bruises the serpent's head. 2. That He might teach us how to meet and to conquer our great enemy. Jesus, the Son of David, goes forth alone, as the Champion of His people, to do battle with the spiritual Goliath, who had so long defied the armies of the living God. And the weapons He takes with Him, and with which He prevails, are but as "smooth stones," picked out of the pure stream of God's Word. 3. That, as Man, He might know by experience the power of temptation, and the fierceness of Satan's attacks, and so might be able to feel with and succour those who are tempted; "for we have "not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our "infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. iv. 15.).

"The devil." This word signifies 'the slanderer' or 'false accuser.'

2. "When He had fasted" &c. How far this miraculous fast was spent in prayer and communion with the Father and holy meditation, and how far, as the words of both St. Mark and St. Luke would lead

A. D. 27. 3 And when the tempter came to Him, he said, If Thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.

4 But He answered and said, It is written, **Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.** Deut. 8. 3.

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us to think, other temptations assaulted our Lord during the passing of this time, we cannot tell. It seems most in accordance with the three accounts to suppose that, while other temptations presented themselves during the rest of the time, the special temptations recorded did not begin till the end of the forty days. Plainly the natural sense of hunger was not felt till then. May we not gather from this fast of our Lord a lesson as to the right way to prepare ourselves to meet Temptation, and to pass in safety through this dangerous world? Christ, being sinless, needed no subduing of the flesh as a discipline for Himself. But He knew *our* need of it. And He shewed us that it is in self-denial and fasting and prayer and secret intercourse with God that the Christian soldier must arm himself for the battle. It is as an aid to this self-discipline that from very ancient times the season of Lent has been kept by the Church as a time of special fasting and penitence and prayer.

3. "When the tempter came to Him." Whether this was in bodily form, or only implies a spiritual presence, we cannot pronounce. But that the tempter came as a distinct *person*, with will, words, and actions, of his own, we cannot doubt. Those who try to explain away the mention of Satan, as only meaning our own inward evil, wholly pervert the plain words of Scripture, and make common cause with unbelievers.

"If Thou be the Son of God." Not as though the devil doubted this, but as suggesting to Him the thought that to satisfy His hunger by turning the stones into bread would be no more than a fitting display of His Divine power. That our Lord could readily have performed this miracle, had He willed, we know by the turning of the water into wine, and the feeding of the multitudes in the wilderness.

4. "It is written." In the Book of Deuteronomy Moses uses these words concerning the manna with which God had fed His people, and which taught them to depend on God, by whose Almighty word their wants had been supplied. Jesus would in like manner show an example of entire dependence upon God, and of willing submission to every outward evil. We see here what is the best weapon with which to resist the tempter, even "the sword of the Spirit, which is "the word of God." In the words which Jesus quotes mark how He makes Himself one with us,—"*Man* shall not live by bread alone": as though He had said, 'I have taken upon Me the wants and infir-'mities of Man, and as Man I hunger now, but even as Man I have 'a higher and truer life than that of the body. The soul's life, and the

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5. The order of the second and third temptations is changed in St. Luke's account. St. Matthew seems to give them more as a connected history, and the answer of our Lord, "Thou shalt worship "the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt "thou serve," seems most appropriate as a concluding one, so that it is best to take the order given in this Gospel as the true one, and to suppose that St. Luke gives the temptations as separate accounts without caring for the exact order in which they took place, which is indeed of very small importance (But see *Note* on St. Luke iv. 8.).

"*Temple.*" See on xxiv. 1.

5 Then the devil taketh Him up [b]into the holy city, and setteth Him on a pinnacle of the temple, A. D. 27. [b] Neh. 11. 1, 18. Isai. 48. 2. & 52. 1. ch. 27. 53. Rev. 11. 2.

6 and saith unto Him, If Thou be the Son of God, cast Thyself down: for it is written, **He shall give His angels charge concerning Thee: and in *their* hands they shall bear Thee up, lest at any time Thou dash Thy foot against a stone.**

Psalm 91. 11, 12.

7 Jesus said unto him, It is written again, **Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.** Deut. 6. 16.

8 Again, the devil taketh Him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth Him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;

'soul's food, they stand first, and the wants of the body I leave to God.' We are at once reminded here of our Lord's words at Jacob's well, "I "have meat to eat that ye know not of," and "My meat is to do the will "of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work" (St. John iv. 32, 34.).

5. "Pinnacle." This was probably the top of the high porch to the Temple which looked to the East, and overhung the valley of Jehoshaphat and the brook Cedron (See on xxi. 1.). The devil seems to have been permitted to have power over our Lord's Body, so as to carry Him where he could best present his temptation.

6. "If Thou be" &c. The second temptation is of a higher and more refined sort than the first. That was a temptation to satisfy the wants of the body by a needless miracle. This is a temptation to try and prove God's power and love by a needless exposure to danger. To have cast Himself down, as the devil desired, would have been in our Lord the act of spiritual pride and presumption. See how Satan himself can quote Scripture for his own bad ends. The beautiful promise in the 91st Psalm is plainly meant to comfort and encourage those who are in danger. It is not meant to embolden men to rush into danger. The devil often tempts by suggesting the blessed promises of God's word to those who have no right to rely on them. In the present case it is remarkable that he omits the very words which give the true meaning of the promise, namely, "to keep thee in all thy ways," that is, 'as 'thou goest in the ways appointed for thee.'

7. "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." That is, thou shalt not *try* God's forbearance by a false and presumptuous trust in Him. We must guard against supposing our Lord to use these words of Satan's temptation of Him. Moses used them of the Israelites trying God's patience by their sinful murmurings.

8. "Again, the devil taketh Him" &c. The third temptation is that of worldly greatness and glory. St. Luke tells us that the devil shewed our Lord "all the kingdoms of the world *in a moment of time*"; which proves that it was a vision, rather than any real scene, which he displayed before Him. We find also from St. Luke's account that the devil, who is "a liar from the beginning," claimed the power to bestow all the earthly power and glory which he shewed. Though indeed prince of this world in its evil, yet he had no power to fulfil this boastful promise. How often does the devil tempt in like manner now. How often does

A. D. 27. 9 and saith unto Him, All these things will I give Thee, if Thou wilt fall down and worship me.

10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, [c] **Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.**

[c] Josh. 24. 14. 1 Sam. 7. 3. Deut. 6. 13. & 10. 20.

11 Then the devil leaveth Him, and, behold, [d] angels came and ministered unto Him.

[d] Heb. 1. 14.

A. D. 28. 32nd Year of our Lord's life. 12 ¶ [e] Now when Jesus had heard that John was [2] cast into prison, He departed into Galilee;

13 and leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim:

14 that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying,

[e] Luke 3. 20. & 4. 14, 31. John 4. 43.

[2] Or, *delivered up.*

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he promise wealth or power or pleasure or fame by a little compliance with his will, a little serving of him instead of God.

Observe how our Lord's threefold temptation answers to the threefold description of sin given by St. John, "the lust of the flesh, and the lust "of the eyes, and the pride of life" (1 St. John ii. 16.); the order of these words being that of the temptations as given by St. Luke. Again mark how the three temptations answer to the three enemies against which we are all pledged to fight,—the world, the flesh, and the devil. For as the first temptation had its power through the flesh, and the third through the world, so the second was a temptation specially befitting the devil himself, as being of a more entirely spiritual nature.

11. "Angels came and ministered unto Him." To minister to another means to serve and wait upon him. Probably these angels brought Him food. Thus in truth were the Psalmist's words fulfilled, and God did indeed give His Angels charge concerning Him.

12—25. Jesus returns to Galilee, calls His first disciples, and begins His public ministry.

St. Mark i. 14—20. St. Luke v. 1—11.

13. "Capernaum." A large and important town at the north-west corner of the beautiful lake known as the Sea of Galilee. Our Lord left Nazareth, where He had been brought up, to dwell at Capernaum, because He was rejected by the people of Nazareth (see St. Luke iv. 28—31.), and possibly also in part because Nazareth was a small place, and at Capernaum more people would hear His teaching and witness His

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12. Considerable space of time must be allowed for between the temptation and the imprisonment of St. John the Baptist. St. Matthew probably passes on quickly to those events of which he had been an eye-witness, and which he therefore was the more fitted to relate. The history which lies between the eleventh and twelfth verses here will be found in the earlier chapters of St. John's gospel (See *Note* on St. John iv. 3.).

"*John was cast into prison.*" For the account of this see xiv. 3—12.

"*Departed.*" We do not know where Jesus was when He thus departed, whether in Judæa, or, as some suppose, at Sychar, where He spent two days after His conversation with the Samaritan woman.

15 **The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim,** *by* **the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles;** A. D. 28.

16 [f] **the people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up.** Isai. 9. 1, 2.

17 From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, [g] Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

18 And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon [h] called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.

[f] Luke 2. 32. Isai. 42. 7.

[g] ch. 3. 2. & 10. 7.

[h] John 1. 42.

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miracles. We read that our Lord was dwelling at Capernaum at the time when He was asked for the tribute money (xvii. 25.), and Capernaum is also called "His own city" (ix. 1.).

15. "The land of Zabulon," &c. The tribes of Zabulon and Nephthalim met on the borders of the Sea of Galilee. This portion of the land was the first which was carried away into captivity by the Assyrians (See 2 Kings xv. 29.). From that time it lay for long in darkness, both as to temporal and as to spiritual things. But Isaiah comforts the people by the prophecy of a great outpouring of light on this very region, which was indeed fulfilled when the "Sun of righteousness" arose unto them "with healing in His wings."

18. "The sea of Galilee." This is a beautiful fresh-water lake, about thirteen miles in length, bounding Galilee on the east. The river Jordan flows through this lake, entering it at the northern and leaving it at the southern end. It is also called the Lake of Gennesareth, Sea of Tiberias, and Sea of Chinnereth, from places on its shore. The trade of fishing was largely carried on in its waters. It is subject to severe gusts of wind, which blow through the valleys in the surrounding hills.

"Called Peter." This name, which means 'Rock,' or 'Stone,' was given to Simon by our Lord when he was first brought to Him by his brother Andrew, as we read in the first chapter of St. John. It was probably given as expressing his boldness and courage; but our Lord at a later time makes a different use of the name (See xvi. 18.).

19. "Follow Me." We must not confound this call of the four disciples to follow Christ with the account given in the first chapter of St. John. That account tells us how they *first* became disciples of Christ, having before been disciples of St. John the Baptist. They do not seem at that time to have given up their old trade of fishing. We now find them called to cast in their lot more entirely with their Lord, and to leave all to follow Him. We may probably conclude from St. Luke that the first miraculous draught of fishes took place at the time of this fuller calling of the two pairs of brothers. Their ready obedience to Christ's call is set before us as an example for our imitation in the beautiful Collect for St. Andrew's Day.

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15. "*Galilee of the Gentiles.*" The northern part of Galilee, joining the country of Tyre and Sidon. It was so called because it was in part inhabited by Gentiles,—a mixed people of various races having dwelt in it from the time of the captivity.

17. "*Repent.*" See on ch. iii. 2.

18. "*Casting a net*" *&c.* This may either be washing their nets (St. Luke v. 2.), or a brief way of saying that they were engaged in their business of fishing.

A. D. 28.

19 And He saith unto them, Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.

[i] Mark 10. 28. Luke 18. 28.

20 [i] And they straightway left *their* nets, and followed Him.

21 And going on from thence, He saw other two brethren, James *the son* of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and He called them.

22 And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed Him.

[k] ch. 9. 35. Mark 1. 21, 39. Luke 4. 15, 44. [l] ch. 24. 14. [m] Mark 1. 34.

23 And Jesus went about all Galilee, [k] teaching in their synagogues, and preaching [l] the gospel of the kingdom, [m] and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.

24 And His fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto Him all sick people that were

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"Fishers of men." To catch men in the net of the Kingdom of heaven (xiii. 47, 48.). The miracle wrought on this occasion would be a great encouragement to the disciples in their new work. They would doubtless see in it a type of the success with which their Lord would bless their fishing for men. The net of Christ's Kingdom gathers "of "every kind," bad as well as good. Christ's ministers can only spread that net, and stretch it around those whom God would call. *When the net is full*, it will be drawn to shore, and the good and bad will be separated for ever.

23. "Synagogues." The places of worship among the Jews, answering in some respects to Parish Churches among ourselves. There were synagogues in all the towns and larger villages. We must notice how constantly during the three years of His public ministry our Lord was engaged in *teaching*, both publicly and privately. He came to be our Prophet, as well as our Priest, and our King. A Prophet was an inspired teacher, one who spoke in God's name. And Christ was the very Word of God. God, who "spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, "hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son" (Heb. i. 1, 2.). That Jesus was allowed to teach and preach in the synagogues shows us that He was looked upon as a religious teacher and leader. The 'Ruler of the Synagogue' had the power to permit any he pleased to read and explain the law. This was generally done by the Rabbis or Doctors, who were trained for the purpose, and admitted to the office by a sort of degree. But it seems from several places that the Jews regarded our Lord and His Apostles as thus qualified, calling them 'Rabbi.' The office of *teaching* was, among the Jews, kept quite distinct from that of the *priesthood*. Many were allowed to teach publicly, who had no part in the sacred duties of the priestly office.

"The gospel of the kingdom." That is, the good tidings of the kingdom of heaven,—the good news that the time was come for that kingdom to be set up on the earth (See on St. Luke viii. 1.).

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24. "*Syria.*" This was the country joining the Holy Land to the north and east.

taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and He healed them. A. D. 28.

25 [n] And there followed Him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and *from* Decapolis, and *from* Jerusalem, and *from* Judæa, and *from* beyond Jordan. [n] Mark 3. 7.

CHAPTER V.

1 *Christ beginneth His sermon in the mount:* 3 *declaring who are blessed,* 13 *who are the salt of the earth,* 14 *the light of the world, the city on an hill,* 15 *the candle:* 17 *that He came to fulfil the law.* 21 *What it is to kill,* 27 *to commit adultery,* 33 *to swear:* 38 *exhorteth to suffer wrong,* 44 *to love even our enemies,* 48 *and to labour after perfectness.*

AND seeing the multitudes, [a] He went up into a mountain: and when He was set, His disciples came unto Him: [a] Mark 3. 13.

2 and He opened His mouth, and taught them, saying,

3 ¶ [b] Blessed *are* the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven. [b] See Ps. 51. 17. Prov. 16. 19. & 29. 23. Isai. 57. 15. & 66. 2.

CHAPTER V.

V.—VII. THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

St. Luke vi. 17—49.

1, 2. Introduction.

St. Luke vi. 17—20.

1. "A mountain." We are not told what this mountain was, nor can we for certain tell, though a mountain is pointed out, near the spot where Capernaum probably stood, as the 'Mount of Beatitudes,' which may have been the true site of this great scene. We can hardly help being struck with the fact that, as the old Law was given on a mountain, so the new Law, or rather the new declaring of the Law, was also given on a mountain. *That* was given in thunders and lightnings and clouds and thick darkness: *this* in the gentle tones of divine love. *That* was written on tables of stone; *this* on the fleshy tables of the heart.

3—12. The Beatitudes.

St. Luke vi. 20—23.

3. "Poor in spirit." Those who think lowlily, humbly, of themselves; the opposite to those who are proud, self-satisfied, self-sufficient.

"The kingdom of heaven." This expression is oftenest used, as in chap. xiii., of that kingdom while in its imperfect state on earth. Here it seems used in its widest sense, and would mean not only the privileges and blessings of Christ's kingdom here below, but also the joy and glory of that kingdom hereafter above.

"*Possessed with devils.*" See on viii. 28.

25. "*Decapolis.*" This word means 'Ten cities,' and was the name of a district on the farther side of the Jordan from Galilee, in which ten towns were situated.

CHAPTER V.

1. The question as to whether the Sermon on the Mount is the same discourse as that related in St. Luke vi. will be considered in that place.

A.D. 28.

4 [c]Blessed *are* they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

5 [d]Blessed *are* the meek: for [e]they shall inherit the earth.

6 Blessed *are* they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: [f]for they shall be filled.

7 Blessed *are* the merciful: [g]for they shall obtain mercy.

8 [h]Blessed *are* the pure in heart: for [i]they shall see God.

9 Blessed *are* the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

[c] Isai. 61. 2, 3. John 16. 20. 2 Cor. 1. 7. Rev. 21. 4.
[d] Ps. 37. 11.
[e] See Rom. 4. 13.
[f] Isai. 55. 1. & 65. 13.
[g] Ps. 41. 1. ch. 6. 14. Mark 11. 25. 2 Tim. 1. 16.
[h] Heb. 6. 10. Jam. 2. 13. Ps. 15. 2. & 24. 4. Heb. 12. 14.
[i] 1 Cor. 13. 12. 1 John 3. 2, 3.

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4. "Mourn." With a spiritual mourning, and a holy sorrow: chiefly perhaps for their sins, but also with any sorrow which is sanctified by resignation to God's will, and patient waiting upon Him.

5. "The earth." This promise is taken from Ps. xxxvii. 11, which says, "The meek shall inherit the earth." In what sense is this said? It may be said in three senses. 1. The meek shall inherit this world, because they shall have a peace and joy even in the midst of this world's troubles, which no others can find. The joys of earth are to the meek very bright, and its sorrows are very blessed. 2. The meek shall inherit this world because God hath chosen them to confound the mighty, and the kingdom of Christ shall be theirs. Their Lord would teach them not to look for temporal glory and dignity. Such is not the expectation of the meek. They will gain their victory by subduing kingdoms for Him who is their pattern in meekness and lowliness of heart. 3. The meek shall inherit the "new heavens and the *new earth*, wherein dwelleth "righteousness." Their days shall be long in *the land*, the better land, which the Lord their God shall give them.

6. "Hunger and thirst." How comforting a saying is this! Had Jesus said, "Blessed are the righteous," who would have dared to take to himself that blessedness? But the sinful may "hunger and "thirst after righteousness." And "they shall be filled." For God will both sanctify them with His blessed Spirit, and justify them for their Saviour's sake. The former—namely sanctification—is doubtless the "righteousness" our Lord speaks of in this verse; yet, knowing how faulty and imperfect such righteousness as we may attain to in this life must ever be, we may well remember that other righteousness, which we may also obtain,—namely the perfect righteousness of justification through the merits and atonement of Jesus Christ.

8. "See God." Both here, and hereafter. Here; for the pure in heart can alone understand God's purity and holiness and love. While the windows of the soul are foul with sin the light of God's truth cannot shine within. But the promise will be most perfectly fulfilled hereafter: for then they that, hoping to see God, have purified themselves even as He is pure, "shall see Him as He is." Their "eyes shall see the "King in His beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off" (Is. xxxiii. 17.).

9. "Children of God." More literally 'sons of God,' because like the true Son of God, who came to make peace, and to gather

10 [k]Blessed *are* they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for their's is the kingdom of heaven.

11 Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you*, and shall say all manner of [1]evil against you [2]falsely, for My sake.

12 [m]Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great *is* your reward in heaven: for [n]so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

A. D. 28.

[k] 2 Cor. 4. 17. 2 Tim. 2. 12. 1 Pet. 3. 14.

[1] 1 Pet. 4. 14.

[2] Gr. *lying.*

[m] Acts 5. 41. Rom. 5. 3. Jam. 1. 2. 1 Pet. 4. 13.

[n] 2 Chr. 36. 16. Neh. 9. 26. ch. 23. 34, 37. Acts 7. 52. 1 Thes. 2. 15.

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together all things in one. The word translated "shall be called," here and in other places, means more than is expressed by the English, and is used almost in the sense of 'shall be'; or perhaps rather, 'shall not only 'be, but shall be proclaimed and owned to be.'

10. "Persecuted." Persecution stands last in the Beatitudes. For it will not come till after that which arouses it. A godly life and holy habits must be in some measure formed before there can be persecution. "All who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim. iii. 12.).

"The kingdom of heaven." The eighth blessing is the same as the first: indeed it is the crown and sum of all blessings, for with "the "kingdom of heaven" we have all things:—here grace, joy, peace;—hereafter glory everlasting.

11. "Falsely, for My sake." Here is the key to the blessedness. The evil speaking must be *false*, the persecution must be *for Christ's sake*, or it can bring no blessing. Sufferings bless not in themselves, but in the manner of receiving them (See 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18.). The kingdom of heaven is promised not to those alone who thus suffer for Christ, but also, above, to the "poor in spirit;" and the two sayings must be joined together if we would understand them aright. It is true the "poor in spirit" may win the blessing without persecution, but the persecuted cannot win it except they be "poor in spirit."

12. "Reward." Here, as everywhere else where used of the future glory of the saints, not the measure of our merits, but the free gift of God.

We cannot pass on without one glance back on this first most beautiful portion of the Sermon on the Mount. It is the picture of the man whom Christ declares "blessed." Very wonderful is this picture in itself. It is a picture to gaze upon, and to study, and to learn by heart, and to set side by side with that of our own sinful selves; that we may both be humbled by seeing how little we are like it, and also strive to win a fuller share of its blessedness. It is also a wonderful opening to the whole Sermon. The great subject of that Sermon is, as we shall see more fully farther on, the nature of *Christian righteousness*, which is shown by applying God's law in the spirit and not in the letter, and which is a far truer, deeper, more spiritual, righteousness than that of the Scribes and Pharisees. And do not the Beatitudes at once declare the true nature of Christian saintliness? It is as though our Lord began His Sermon by a vivid description of the true saint, that from that He might the better go on to discuss the varied marks and evidences of the saintly character. He draws a glowing picture of the "blessed," and, holding that up and pointing to it, says (as it were), 'Now listen while 'I unfold to you the hidden elements of strength and beauty which make

A. D. 28.

13 ¶ Ye are the salt of the earth: [o] but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

14 [p] Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

15 Neither do men [q] light a candle, and put it under [2] a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

16 Let your light so shine before men, [r] that they may see your good works, and [s] glorify your Father which is in heaven.

[o] Mark 9. 50. Luke 14. 34, 35.
[p] Prov. 4. 18. Phil. 2. 15.
[q] Mark 4. 21. Luke 8. 16. & 11. 33.
[2] The word in the original signifieth *a measure containing about a pint less than a peck.*
[r] 1 Pet. 2. 12.
[s] John 15. 8. 1 Cor. 14. 25.

'up this perfect whole.' Observe too how this picture is entirely that of a *spiritual* holiness, such as the whole Sermon enforces. It is no *doing* of this or that *duty* which is declared so "blessed." Christ goes at once to the heart. His picture is by a few masterly strokes full of the living inward graces which form and stamp and characterize the Christian man. It is the spirit, and not the body;—the light and shade and colour, not the mere outline;—the kernel and not the shell:—which we are looking on now. The poor in spirit, the mourners, the meek, the hungry and thirsty after righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, the persecuted:—here is surely a picture of a righteousness exceeding that of the Scribes and Pharisees. For is it not in very truth a picture of Him who drew it?

13—16. The Church to purify and enlighten the world.

13. "The salt." To preserve the world from corruption. The question "Wherewith shall it be salted?" refers, probably, to the *salt*, and not to the world. The meaning is, If the teachers of the world become spiritually corrupt and graceless, who shall teach and turn them? They are like tasteless salt; they can give no savour to any thing else, nor is there any thing else which can give savour to them. An awful warning to the faithless Christian minister.

14. "The light." Not the "true light," for Christ is "the true "Light, which lighteth every man." Christ's people shine with borrowed light, as the moon and planets with that of the sun. They are like a shining "cloud of witnesses" (Hebr. xii. 1.).

"A city set on an hill." The Church of God, the spiritual Zion, "the Mountain of the Lord's house" (Isaiah ii. 2.), this "cannot be hid," but must stand forth in the sight of the world.

15. "Neither do men" &c. The disciples are the candle, lit from Christ the true Light, and the candlestick is the Church set up to shed abroad the light in the world (See Rev. i. 20, and compare St. Mark iv. 21. St. Luke viii. 16. & xi. 33.).

16. "So." This means 'thus,' or 'in like manner,' that is, like a candle on a candlestick. This command must be set side by side with the warnings to the Scribes and Pharisees against hypocrisy and

13. "*His savour.*" This would in these days be translated '*its* savour', which is what it means, and then it would be plainer that "it", in the question which follows, refers to the salt. When our translation of the Bible was made 'its' was never used, 'his' being used for the neuter as well as the masculine pronoun.

17 ¶ [t]Think not that I am come to destroy the law, A. D. 28.
or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. [t] Rom. 3. 31. & 10. 4. Gal. 3. 24.
18 For verily I say unto you, [u]Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass [u] Luke 16. 17. from the law, till all be fulfilled.

display. Here we are told to let our religion be seen, in order that men may glorify God; there we are told not to make a display of it so that men may glorify us (See on St. John xv. 8.).

17—20. Christ the Fulfiller of the Law.

17. "Think not" &c. With this verse begins more distinctly the great subject of the Sermon on the Mount. That subject is Christian righteousness as shown in the spiritualizing—the Christianizing—of the revealed Law of God. Christ does not give a *new* meaning to the Law. Much less does He give a *new Law*. He brings out and displays the *true* meaning, the spiritual, the Christian, meaning, which always lay —though hidden for the most part—in the Law. We must also not think that this true and spiritual meaning of the Law was hidden through any imperfection in the Law itself, for "the law is holy, and the "commandment is holy, and just, and good" (Rom. vii. 12.). It was hidden through man's blindness, and unfitness to receive it. This subject—the drawing out of the spiritual meaning of the Law—occupies the remainder of the Sermon, though more particularly to the end of the eighteenth verse of the sixth chapter. Observe how St. Paul's words (Rom. iii. 31.) bear upon this subject, "Do we then make void the "law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law."

"I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." Much of the old Law was to *end* with Christ; no part of it was to *be destroyed*. The Law was of a mixed nature: part being in its very nature eternally binding upon God's people; part distinctly temporary, and prophetic of the Messiah. He came to "fulfil" *all:* the moral Law, by His perfect sinlessness; the ceremonial, or typical, Law, by His perfect completion of all its types and figures. Nay, more; He came to give to the Law a *fulness* in the eyes of men which it had not before. To "fulfil" in this place means more than simply to obey and accomplish. It means rather to *fill up*. Christ fulfilled the law by showing its fulness and breadth and completeness. He filled it up, as a painter might the outline of a sketch, putting in all the colours and shades and expression. He filled it full of life and power, as a spirit fills a body. He poured through it a stream of Divine light, and men beheld its spiritual excellence.

18. "One jot or one tittle." The "jot" was the smallest of the Hebrew letters; the "tittle" a very little mark by which one letter was known from another. What a mighty testimony does this verse give, not only to the truth of the Old Testament, but also to its perfect unity with the New! Unbelievers have always begun by slighting the Old Testament. Let any tempted to do so remember that Old and New must stand or fall together; and that those who attack the Old Testament are knocking away the foundations from Christianity itself. In this verse the Son of God has Himself set His seal to the truth of the Old Testament, and proved to us that the Church is right in teaching that "the Old "Testament is not contrary to the New: for both in the Old and New "Testament everlasting life is offered to mankind by Christ" (Article vii.).

A. D. 28. 19 [x] Whosoever therefore shall break one of these
[x] Jam. 2. 10. least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach *them*, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

20 For I say unto you, That except your righteous-
[y] Rom. 9. 31. & 10. 3. ness shall exceed [y] *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

[2] Or, *to them.* 21 ¶ Ye have heard that it was said [2] by them of

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19. "**Whosoever therefore**" &c. This verse gives still greater weight to the sanctity of the old Law; although it seems spoken rather of the *moral* part of it—that part which is eternally binding—than of that part which was to find its fulfilment and end in Christ.

"**Least.**" Observe the repetition of this word. He that breaks, and teaches men to break, the *least* command of God's Law shall be *least* in God's kingdom. Our Lord does not say such an one will lose his place in that kingdom altogether. But he will forfeit the higher place of the more faithful teacher. So St. Paul teaches us (1 Cor. iii. 14, 15.) that errors may imperil without wholly destroying the soul; for the man who builds up faulty doctrine on the true foundation of Christ "shall be "saved," because of his true foundation; "yet so as by fire,"—as a brand plucked from the burning,—because of his errors.

20. This verse may almost be taken as the text for the following part of the Sermon. Jesus is going on to show how the Christian's righteousness must exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees (that is, the righteousness both *taught* and *practised* by them), because his view of God's Law is so much deeper and more spiritual than theirs. It might well make us tremble to hear thus of the greater righteousness required from the Christian, but that we know that He who thus deepens and broadens our view of God's Law also gives the strength and grace to do it, and by His own perfect obedience wins for us pardon for our failure in the doing.

21—26. The Law of Murder.

21. "**Thou shalt not kill.**" Our Lord's first example of the Christian view of God's Law is drawn from the sixth Commandment. We here see that the difference between the light in which the Jew of old regarded the Law and the light in which the Christian should regard it is simply the difference between the *letter* and the *spirit*. The Scribes and Pharisees taught that to break the sixth Commandment was simply to take another's life, and they had no idea of any other way of breaking it. This was to understand it in the *letter*. Our Lord teaches that bad

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20. "*Scribes.*" *See on* ii. 4.

21. "*By them.*" This, as the margin shows, may with equal correctness be translated '*to* them.' In that case the sense would be, 'It was said to them of 'old time *by God*.' This would destroy the force of what is said upon the word "I" in the next verse, and would throw the contrast upon the "*you*." 'It was 'said to *them of old time*—but I say unto '*you*—'. However, comparing this verse with the examples which follow, it seems best to accept "*by* them," as in the text, for, though the examples are drawn from God's law, yet they are used to express rather man's narrow view of that law, than the mind of God.

old time, **Thou shalt not kill**; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: A. D. 28.

Ex. 20. 13. Deut. 5. 17.

22 but I say unto you, That [b] whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, [5] [c] Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

[b] 1 John 3. 15.

[5] That is, *Vain fellow*, 2 Sam. 6. 20.

[c] James 2. 20.

23 Therefore [d] if thou bring thy gift to the altar,

[d] ch. 8. 4. & 23. 19.

feelings and bad words equally break this commandment. This is to understand it in the *spirit*. The reason why anger and unkind words break the sixth Commandment is plainly because they are signs of the same evil temper in the heart, which, when given way to, leads the murderer to his awful sin. Think how many more murders there would be but for the fear of consequences. Sin must be sought out in its *root*. The Jew only saw it when its deadly *fruit* was ripe.

"The judgment." This means the court of justice which tried the murderer for his crime.

22. "I." We must put great force into this word. It is as though it were written, 'Those of old (as the Scribes and Pharisees teach) said, 'Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be punished for 'breaking this Law; but *I*—I, who am come to fulfil the law and to show 'you its spirit and its meaning,—*I* say unto you that angry feelings and 'angry words are sins against this same law' (See on vii. 28, 29.).

"Raca." "Thou fool." Our Lord plainly would condemn all angry, bitter, reviling, language. The word 'Fool' is now so common in English, that no one can suppose its use to be what is here condemned, except when it is used in wrath or contempt. Indeed Jesus Himself frequently used the word in His solemn reproofs of the folly which He witnessed around Him. However, the word itself is not the important matter, as it is the spirit in which the word is spoken that gives it its guilt.

"Judgment"—"council"—"hell fire." The original words here signify three degrees of punishment among the Jews, increasing in severity. "Hell fire" is 'Gehenna,' the vale of Hinnom, or Tophet, a valley south of Jerusalem, in which the bodies of those stoned were burnt, and which from this became, first a type, and afterwards a title, of the place of eternal punishment (See on St. Luke xvi. 23.). Our Saviour uses the three words to express different degrees of guilt. We may not see the increasing degrees of guilt in the 'anger,' 'Raca,' and 'Thou fool,' but no doubt they represent increasing degrees of malice and hatred.

23. "Therefore." That is, because anger and strife are so sinful and dangerous, as the last verse shows. Therefore, if, when thou comest to offer thy gift to God, thou "remembrest that thy brother hath ought "against thee," that is, any complaint against thee, any cause for anger or ill feeling, go and make friends first before offering thy gift. No

22. "*Without a cause.*" There is some doubt whether or no these words are genuine. Some of the oldest copies do not give them. If our Saviour did not speak them, His words are only the stronger; for then He would be condemning the giving way to anger of any sort, and not only to *causeless* anger.

A. D. 28. and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee;

[e] See Job 42. 8. ch. 18. 19. 1 Tim. 2. 8. 1 Pet. 3. 7.

24 [e] leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

[f] Prov. 25. 8. Luke 12. 58, 59.

[g] See Ps. 32. 6. Isai. 55. 6.

25 [f] Agree with thine adversary quickly, [g] whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.

26 Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.

27 ¶ Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, **Thou shalt not commit adultery:**

Ex. 20. 14. Deut. 5. 18.

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offering, no prayer or praise, no self-denial or deed of charity, much more no offering of soul and body at the Christian altar—the holy Table of the Lord, can be acceptable to God, if it comes from a heart defiled with anger and strife and an unforgiving temper. How striking a comment upon this passage is supplied by God Himself, speaking by His prophet (Isaiah i. 12—18.), "When ye come to appear before Me, who "hath required this at your hand, to tread My courts? Bring no more "vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto Me; the new moons and "sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, "even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts "My soul hateth: they are a trouble unto Me; I am weary to bear them. "And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide Mine eyes from you: "yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear."—And why? Why did God hate and refuse all those very things which He had Himself specially commanded? The next words answer,—"*Your hands are full "of blood.*" They too broke the same commandment which Christ is enforcing, and the breakers of which can offer no gift acceptable to God.

25. **"Agree with thine adversary quickly."** Ready forgiveness and reconciliation are here enforced by a second argument. The former argument said, Make peace quickly, or God will not accept your gift. This argument says, Make peace quickly, or you may lose the chance for ever. The actual words are a parable. It is not the vengeance of your enemy that you should fear. But, as an earthly enemy, if you will not make peace, may take his revenge, and get you cast into prison; so will God's offended Law condemn you, and cast you into hell, if you cherish pride and resentment against your brother when you should seek peace and forgiveness.

26. **"Till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing."** That is, *never;* as in the parable of the Unmerciful Servant (See xviii. 30—34.).

27—32. The Law of Adultery.

27. **"Adultery."** Our Lord now deals with the seventh Commandment as He before dealt with the sixth. As an evil temper or a bitter

28 but I say unto you, That whosoever [h]looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

29 [i]And if thy right eye [2]offend thee, [k]pluck it out, and cast *it* from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into hell.

30 And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast *it* from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into hell.

31 It hath been said, [1]**Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement:** Deut. 24. 1.

32 but I say unto you, That [m]whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.

A. D. 28.

h Job 31. 1. Prov. 6. 25. See Gen. 34. 2. 2 Sam. 11. 2.

i ch. 18. 8, 9. Mark 9. 43, —47.

2 Or, *do cause thee to offend.*

k See ch. 19. 12. Rom. 8. 13. 1 Cor. 9. 27. Col. 3. 5.

l Jer. 3. 1. See ch. 19. 3, &c. Mark 10. 2, &c.

m ch. 19. 9. Luke 16. 18. Rom. 7. 3. 1 Cor. 7. 10, 11.

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word breaks that, so does an impure look break this. Well may we say, "Thy commandment is exceeding broad" (Ps. cxix. 96.).

29. "Right eye." The "right eye" and "the right hand" are our dearest and best possessions. The meaning is that every thing, even that which is most precious, must be sacrificed at once, if it lead us into sin. To "offend" means literally to 'make to stumble.' It is important to remember this its older and more correct sense in reading the Bible. Whatever makes us stumble, be it the dearest friend, or the best-loved pursuit, or the most prized talent, it must be freely given up, if we would reach heaven. Observe, the "right eye" and the "right hand" are *not sins;* they are only *occasions of sin.* Thus the command answers to that of St. Paul, "Mortify" [that is, kill] "therefore your members "which are upon the earth" (Col. iii. 5.). And, as an example, we may take the riches of the young man, who, because they *offended* him, or caused him to stumble, was bidden to sell all that he had, and to give to the poor (See xix. 21.).

31. "Whosoever shall put away" &c. The discourse upon the seventh Commandment leads our Lord naturally to notice the laxity of the Jewish practice with regard to divorce. Moses permitted divorce on certain grounds; but, to prevent divorces being lightly made, or on insufficient grounds, he commanded that no divorce should take place except by a proper legal deed. Even this permission, guarded by the law, was only granted, as our Lord says, because of the hardness of the people's hearts (See xix. 8.). Jesus claims a far greater strictness and sanctity for Christian marriage, going back to God's original law, "They twain shall be one flesh." Thus did He again "fulfil," and

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32. "*Her that is divorced.*" There is a great difference of opinion as to the meaning of these words; the chief question being whether they mean her that is divorced *illegally*, as though it were 'her that is *so* divorced', that is,

A. D. 28.
33 ¶ Again, ye have heard that [n] it hath been
[n] ch. 23. 16. said by them of old time, [o] **Thou shalt not for-**
[o] Ex. 20. 7. Deut. 5. 11. **swear thyself, but** [p] **shalt perform unto the Lord**
[p] Deut. 23. 23. **thine oaths:** Lev. 19. 12. Num. 30. 2.

[q] ch. 23. 16, 18, 22. James 5. 12.
34 but I say unto you, [q] Swear not at all; neither
by heaven; for it is [r] God's throne:
[r] Isai. 66. 1.
35 nor by the earth; for it is His footstool: neither
[s] Ps. 48. 2. & 87. 3.
by Jerusalem; for it is [s] the city of the great King.
36 Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because
thou canst not make one hair white or black.

[t] Col. 4. 6. James 5. 12.
37 [t] But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay,
nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.

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not destroy, the Law. Our Lord only allows one ground of divorce to Christians, which is, unfaithfulness to the marriage vow. He who puts away his wife for any other reason "causeth her to commit "adultery" by giving her the opportunity of marrying another, when she is really still the lawful wife of her former husband.

33—37. The Law of Oaths.

33. "Thou shalt not forswear thyself." The next point in which our Lord shows the spiritual nature of God's Law is in the matter of oaths. God's word permits solemn oaths and vows, and God Himself sometimes confirms His word to man by such sacred appeals. But God's solemn oath was only needed because of man's unwillingness to believe; and man's solemn oath is only needed because of his forgetfulness of God's presence and power. Thus even the holiest oaths are caused by the *evil* in man. But such are both lawful and needful, while evil remains, as is taught in the Thirty-ninth Article of the Church. The Jews however had added their own traditions to God's Law. They made use of a number of oaths in their common talk, and their teachers taught them to regard these as binding in various degrees according to the words used. Thus, if they swore by the name of God, the oath was to be strictly kept; if by some of the other oaths here named, it was not so great a sin to break it. To all this Jesus answers,—1. that the Christian should use no needless oath at all; and, 2. that any oath is really an appeal to God, or else has no meaning.

37. "Yea, yea; Nay, nay." That is, the simple truth in simple words. St. James' words (v. 12.) should be compared with this verse, "Above all "things, my brethren, swear not: . . but let your yea be yea, and "your nay nay." The Christian should be so entirely truthful and open that no oath could make his words stronger. He should speak "the truth from his heart," and his simplest word should be as trustworthy as the most sacred oath.

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for any *other* cause than that allowed by our Lord, namely, unfaithfulness to her husband, (and who would thus be still, in God's eye, the lawful wife of her former husband); or, more generally, *any* divorced woman, whether divorced legally or not. It is impossible to discuss so large a question satisfactorily within the compass of a note. Those anxious for practical guidance in the matter will doubtless obtain it elsewhere. The parallel passages should be carefully considered here.

38 ¶ Ye have heard that it hath been said, **An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:** A. D. 28.
Ex. 21. 24. Lev. 24. 20. Deut. 19. 21.

39 but I say unto you, [u]That ye resist not evil: [x]but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.

40 And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have *thy* cloke also.

41 And whosoever [y]shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.

[u] Prov. 20. 22. & 24. 29. Rom. 12. 17, 19. 1 Cor. 6. 7. 1 Thes. 5. 15. 1 Pet. 3. 9.
[x] Isai. 50. 6. Lam. 3. 30.
[y] ch. 27. 32. Mark 15. 21.

38—42. The Law of Retaliation.

St. Luke vi. 29, 30.

38. "An eye for an eye." The next example is concerning the law of revenge. The law of Moses exacted a punishment of the same kind as the injury done. This the Jew thought a permission to private revenge. Perhaps the law of Moses in this case was intended to prevent the punishment being greater than the offence deserved; but, at any rate, it gave no countenance to private revenge. Our Lord, however, goes to the root of the matter, and condemns all revengeful feelings and acts, teaching the Christian to return good for evil. Just as in the matter of oaths the Christian takes the great law of *truthfulness* for his guide, so in this matter of the punishment of wrongs he finds the great law of *love* towering high above all other considerations. He cares not for justice which is to him revenge. He would rather take a second wrong than revenge a first. We must observe that this passage only concerns our private conduct, and cannot be applied to the laws of the land, and the punishments they inflict.

39. "Turn to him the other also." That is, 'Submit without complaining to the wrong, and rather let the wrong be repeated than 'revenge yourselves.' There are many cases in which such a command is most needful. Still this and the following examples are of the nature of parables, not intended to be acted upon in the letter, but in the spirit. Observe our Lord's own conduct when struck in the judgment-hall (St. John xviii. 23.), and St. Paul's rebuke to the high priest who had ordered him to be smitten (Acts xxiii. 3.).

40. "Thy coat." In payment of a debt, probably. If a man treats you hardly by putting the law in force against you, instead of resenting and revenging it, do him some good turn.

41. "Compel thee." The word here used is taken from the Persian, and signifies compulsory enforcement in the service of the state, it being lawful in Persia for the officers of the state to force private persons to forward them on their journeys. The Romans seem to have adopted the same plan in Palestine, private persons being required to forward messengers for the Roman government, which would naturally be looked upon as a great grievance. The meaning then would be, If you are thus compelled to forward a man one mile, instead of resenting it as a wrong, rather do it cheerfully and liberally. Observe how our Lord takes his illustrations; 1. from a private wrong; 2. from a hard sentence of the law; and 3. from an unjust burden laid on by tyrannical rulers.

39. "*Evil.*" This may be translated 'the evil man', that is, one who has proved himself evil by his conduct to you.

A. D. 28. 42 Give to him that asketh thee, and [z] from him
[z] Deut. 15. 8, 10. that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.

43 ¶ Ye have heard that it hath been said, **Thou**
[a] Deut. 23. 6. Ps. 41. 10. **shalt love thy neighbour,** [a] and hate thine enemy:
Lev. 19. 18.

[b] Rom. 12. 14, 20. 44 but I say unto you, [b] Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you,
[c] Luke 23. 34. Acts 7. 60. 1 Cor. 4. 12, 13. 1 Pet. 2. 23. & 3. 9. and pray [c] for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

[d] Job 25. 3. 45 that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for [d] He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

46 For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?

47 And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more *than others*? do not even the publicans so?

43—48. The Law of Love.

St. Luke vi. 27, 28, 32—36.

43. "Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy." The Law of Love is the next example. These words are not actually a part of the Law, but they give the spirit of it. That Law taught the Israelites in every way to be a distinct and separate people, and to hold themselves aloof from all the other nations of the earth. The Gentiles (that is, all other nations—'foreigners,' as we might say,) were to be the enemies of God's people, because enemies of God. And these words must not be taken to refer to *private* feelings of love and hatred, but to the wide *national* position of God's chosen people.

44. "Love your enemies." Thus did our Lord "fulfil" the law of Love, widening it till it embraces all the world and leaves no "enemies" to hate save sin and the devil. Compare with this the parable of the Good Samaritan (St. Luke x.), which teaches us that every man is our neighbour.

45. "The children of your Father which is in heaven." That is, *like* Him, as children resemble their parents. God does not keep His love and His goodness for those only who love Him and do His will. He loves His enemies, and is continually pouring His blessings upon them. Thus He sets us an example of universal love.

46. "The publicans." These were the collectors of the public taxes, employed by the Romans, who at that time ruled Palestine (that is, the Holy Land), as they did a great portion of the known world. The Jews naturally hated their Roman conquerors, and none but the lowest and least respectable of the Jews would undertake to collect the taxes for them. Thus 'publican' came to be a word for the worst and lowest of men, which they really for the most part were. Our Lord says that the worst characters will love those who love them, and salute their own brethren when they meet them. How much higher then should be the Christian's rule.

48 [e] Be ye therefore perfect, even [f] as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

[e] Gen. 17. 1. Lev. 11. 44. & 19. 2. Col. 1. 28. & 4. 12. James 1. 4. 1 Pet. 1. 15, 16.
[f] Eph. 5. 1.

CHAPTER VI.

1 *Christ continueth His sermon in the mount, speaking of alms,* 5 *prayer,* 14 *forgiving our brethren,* 16 *fasting,* 19 *where our treasure is to be laid up,* 24 *of serving God, and mammon:* 25 *exhorteth not to be careful for worldly things:* 33 *but to seek God's kingdom.*

TAKE heed that ye do not your [2] alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward [3] of your Father which is in heaven.

2 Or, *righteousness,* Deut. 24. 13. Ps. 112. 9. Dan. 4. 27. 2 Cor. 9. 9, 10.
3 Or, *with.*

48. "Be ye therefore perfect." These words seem to closely belong to what has gone before, and thus to refer rather to perfection of *loving* than to *general* perfection (Compare St. Luke vi. 36.). But what is to be perfect? If it is to be "without blemish and without spot", then we can only take the command to mean that perfection, such as God's own, must be our aim and standard. For he that would, from such a verse as this, draw the doctrine that man can in this life reach the spotless holiness of God must have very imperfect views both of God's holiness and of man's sinfulness. But the word 'perfect' in the Bible does not mean quite what it means in our common language in modern days. It is rather 'complete in every part', than 'without spot of sin'. So that a man would be called 'perfect' who had gained all Christian graces in some measure, although he possessed no one of these graces in its highest and fullest measure. See, for example, the use of the word by St. James (iii. 2.). So here, "Be ye perfect" does not mean 'Have as pure and stainless a love as God's' (for that you cannot have), but 'Leave out no part of the copy God sets you', 'Have every grace 'which is His'. He loves and blesses His enemies: therefore, if you would be like Him, make your character complete by adding this grace too.

CHAPTER VI.

1—4. Almsgiving.

In this chapter, to the end of the eighteenth verse, our Lord continues His great subject, the spiritualizing, or Christianizing, of God's Law, by showing in the case of three great outward duties, Almsgiving, Prayer, and Fasting, how the righteousness of the Christian must exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees. In other words, He is *fulfilling the Law* by showing that even in its great positive outward duties it has a spiritual depth and reality, without which the performance of such duties is valueless in the sight of God.

1. "Alms." The original word in this verse [though not in the next] signifies 'righteousness', and this translation, which is given in the margin of our Bible, is a better one than 'alms.' This first verse is, in short, a *general* precept, embracing the three examples which follow. "Take heed "that ye do not your righteousness before men, to be seen of them." This is the *general* precept. The 1st example is that of Almsgiving (2—4.); the 2nd, that of Prayer (5—15.); the 3rd, that of Fasting (16—18.). This command must be compared with that in the chapter before, which says, "Let your light so shine before men" (v. 16.). We are not to be ashamed of our religion appearing before men: but, if we act *in order "to be seen of men,"* our action is no longer righteousness, but hypocrisy.

A. D. 28.

2 Therefore [a] when thou doest *thine* alms, [4] do not
[a] Rom. 12. 8.
[4] Or, *cause not a trumpet to be sounded.*
sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

3 But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth:

4 that thine alms may be in secret: and thy
[b] Luke 14. 14.
Father which seeth in secret Himself [b] shall reward thee openly.

5 ¶ And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites *are:* for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

[c] 2 Kin. 4. 33.
6 But thou, when thou prayest, [c] enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

[d] Eccles. 5. 2.
7 But when ye pray, [d] use not vain repetitions, as

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2. "Hypocrites." A hypocrite originally meant an actor in a play, who wore a mask, and whose business was to personate some one else. Thus the word naturally came to mean any pretender, any one who tries to appear different from what he really is.

"Their reward." That is, the reward they seek, and the only reward their deeds can obtain, namely, the "glory of men."

3. "Let not thy left hand know." This is a proverb to express the secresy and modesty with which every humble Christian will give his alms. He will avoid all display, and seek only the approval of his heavenly Father.

4. "Reward." The blessedness of almsgiving, so constantly taught in God's Word, is nowhere displayed so remarkably as in the description of the great Judgment of all nations in ch. xxv. (See especially verses 40 and 45.).

5—15. Prayer, with the Lord's Prayer.

St. Luke xi. 1—4.

5. "Standing in the synagogues." That is, making a public show of their devotion. Standing was the common posture for prayer among the Jews, as kneeling is now among Christians. To put on sanctity of manner, or devoutness of attitude, without the inward spirit of devotion, and for the sake of seeming better than we are, is to be guilty of the hypocrisy of the Jewish Pharisees. A devout manner and posture is a right thing, and a great help to devotion, when it is the simple and natural expression of the inward feelings.

6. "Enter into thy closet." This may be fulfilled both literally, and as a figure: literally, by withdrawing to some secret place for private prayer; as a figure, by entering at any time into the secret chamber of the heart, and there holding communion with God.

7. "Vain repetitions." That all repetitions are not vain we know

the heathen *do:* [e] for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. A. D. 28.

[e] 1 Kings 18. 26, 29.

8 Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask Him.

9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name.

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from our Lord's own prayer in the garden, where He three times repeated the same words (xxvi. 39—44.). The earnestness of strong supplication often expresses itself in a repetition of the same words. We can all feel the warmth conveyed in the frequent repetition of the same response, "Good Lord, deliver us," or "We beseech Thee to hear us, Good Lord," in our beautiful Litany, as well as in other instances of repetition in our Prayer Book. The repetition of the Lord's Prayer in our Services is sometimes objected to. This repetition is sometimes more frequent than was intended, owing to the use of several separate Services at the same time, none of which would, of course, be complete without the Lord's Prayer. But when a man has prayed every petition in that prayer with all the earnestness he is capable of, and when he has given to each petition all the fulness and depth of meaning which it will bear, then it will be time to complain of the repetition. May we not often be glad of the opportunity of praying earnestly the words which we have before let slip through inattention, or of praying them in the different senses which to thoughtful persons they will bear? We have instances of "vain "repetitions" as used by the "heathen" in the calling upon Baal (1 Kings xviii. 26.), and upon Diana of the Ephesians (Acts xix. 34.). "Vain "repetitions" are encouraged whenever a value is attached to the actual number of times certain prayers are repeated.

8. "Your Father knoweth." If so, why then should we pray? Not to inform God of our needs, but because He wills to give to those that ask. It is the same with confession of sin. It may be said, Why confess our sins to God, who knows them far better than we do? Not to teach *God* our sinfulness, but to teach *ourselves.*

9. "After this manner." The Greek word here is simply 'thus', and gives no ground for saying that the Lord's Prayer is merely a model upon which we should frame our prayers; especially when the prayer is introduced in St. Luke's Gospel (xi. 2.) with the words, "When ye pray, say."

"Our Father." Not '*My* Father,' but "*Our* Father," that we may embrace one another in our prayers. Our prayers must be loving, not selfish. Religion is not a matter only between a man's soul and his God, as is sometimes said. It is also a matter between a man and his brother. "He prayeth best who loveth best," as has been well said. The title "Father" was seldom used in prayer to God under the Old Covenant. It is Christ, the eternal Son, who has revealed the Father to us; and it is the special privilege of all baptized Christians to draw nigh unto God in the "spirit of adoption," that is, as God's adopted children in Christ Jesus. God sent forth His Son to redeem us, "that we might receive "the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth "the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal. iv. 4—6. See also on iii. 17.).

"Which art in heaven." That is, in Thy majesty and glory. God is

f ch. 26. 39, 42. Acts 21. 14. g Ps. 103. 20, 21.

10 Thy kingdom come. f Thy will be done in earth, g as *it is* in heaven.

everywhere. Yet there is a visible manifestation of His presence in heaven. And, as we hope to behold His glory hereafter, so do we lift up our thoughts to that abode of glory now.

"**Hallowed be Thy name.**" That is, May Thy Name be glorified. One way in which God's Name may be hallowed is told us by our Lord, who says, "Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit" (St. John xv. 8.). And St. Paul puts the same thought in the shape of a command, when he writes, "Do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. x. 31.). The Psalmist points out another way in which we may hallow God's Name, when he says, "Whoso offereth Me thanks and praise, he "honoureth Me" (Psalm L. 23. *Prayer-book version.*). Nor must we forget how impossible it is for any one to *pray* this one short petition who is guilty of such dishonour to God's holy Name as is forbidden by the third Commandment.

10. "**Thy kingdom come.**" There is a sense in which Christ's kingdom is come already. The very message of the Forerunner was "The "kingdom of heaven is at hand"; and Christ Himself speaks of the kingdom of God as come (St. Matt. xii. 28.; St. Luke xi. 20., and xvii. 21.). So too, many of the parables of our Lord speak of His kingdom as it exists now in the world (See ch. xiii.), and St. Paul says distinctly that God "hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son" (Col. i. 13.). Yet there is a fuller higher and more glorious sense in which the kingdom of God has not yet come, and in which therefore we pray for its coming. We pray, firstly, for the *fuller* and *more perfect* coming of God's kingdom, for the growth of the Mustard-tree, and the spreading of the Leaven, even till "at the Name of Jesus every knee" shall "bow," and "every tongue" shall "confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of "God the Father" (Phil. ii. 10, 11.). Thus this petition is truly a Missionary prayer. We pray, secondly, that God's kingdom may come with power into our hearts—that He may there reign supreme—that the kingdom of God may be indeed within us. And, thirdly, we pray for that final and glorious coming of the kingdom of God, for which we also pray in our Burial Service in the words, "beseeching Thee, that it "may please Thee, of Thy gracious goodness, shortly to accomplish the "number of Thine elect, and to hasten Thy kingdom": and which final and glorious coming shall be proclaimed by the angel's voice, saying, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and "of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. xi. 15.).

"**Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.**" God's will has respect to two things—doing and suffering. When Jesus said, "My meat "is to do the will of Him that sent Me" (St. John iv. 34.), He spoke of the first: when He said, "Not My will, but Thine, be done" (St. Luke xxii. 42.), He spoke of the second. Perhaps the example of the angels would lead us to understand the petition rather of the first—that is, rather of the active and voluntary doing of God's will, than of the patient

10. "*Thy kingdom come.*" It may be not out of place here to remark that the magnificent passage quoted in the commentary above from Rev. xi. 15. gains greatly in force, and in appropriateness to this petition of the Lord's Prayer, by the truer reading of 'kingdom' for 'kingdoms.' The true translation should be 'The kingdom of this world is become 'the kingdom of our Lord and of His 'Christ.'

11 Give us this day our [h]daily bread.

12 And [i]forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

[h] See Job 23. 12. Prov. 30. 8.

[i] ch. 18. 21, &c.

suffering of it. Yet there is no need to shut out the latter. The angels being given here as our example in doing God's will, we must ask, How do they do it? So far as is made known to us, their work seems to be two-fold, blissful adoration on the one hand, and active service on the other. Sometimes they are joining in the eternal worship of the heavenly choirs; sometimes they are sent forth to minister to the heirs of salvation here below. So, if we would do God's will as they do, it must be by a life of secret devotion and of active outward good.

Observe how closely the first three petitions are linked together. How is God's name glorified? By the growth and well-being of His kingdom. How is His kingdom enlarged and established? By the heavenly lives and characters of His people. "The kingdom of God is within you" (St. Luke xvii. 21.).

11. "Give us this day our daily bread." The former petitions were for God's glory. It is "*Thy* name," "*Thy* kingdom," "*Thy* will." Thus in our prayers, as in our lives, we would "do all to the glory of God," and "seek first" His "kingdom" and "righteousness." We now come to our own more direct needs. It is now "Give *us*," "Forgive *us*," "Lead *us*," "Deliver *us*." And first we ask for "daily bread," in which we include, as our Catechism teaches, "all things that be needful both for our souls "and bodies." For Christians in all ages have understood this prayer of the support of the soul as well as of that of the body, seeing in it a petition for the Bread and Water of life. Its first meaning is however of bodily needs. And here mark how our Lord teaches the same lesson as that a little farther on, "Take no thought for your life" (25.). To-day's needs are all we pray for. And this is partly to keep us from cares and anxieties about the future, which is in God's hand, and partly that we may each day renew our modest requests, and cast ourselves afresh on the care of Him from whom all good things do come.

12. "And forgive us our debts." If the last petition casts us on God for the supply of *all* our needs, we now see what needs are the most pressing. There is no more mention of bodily wants. One brief request for "daily bread" is enough for them. The rest of the petitions are all for spiritual blessings. The first of these is the pardon of sin, which is here spoken of as a debt against God, as in the parable of the unmerciful servant (xviii. 23—35.), which is the best commentary upon the words before us. The Lord's Prayer being a prayer for Christians, the "debts" or "trespasses" are to be understood rather of the daily infirmities and short-comings of God's faithful children, than of the greater and wilful sins of hardened sinners. These must be repented of before we are fit to say "Our Father." Thus our Church has well ordered that we should begin our worship with confession, before we take into our mouths the divine words with which as loving children we approach our heavenly Father. It has been well said that "Dailiness of sin needs dailiness of sorrow."

"As we forgive our debtors." We dare no otherwise pray for forgiveness of our own sins; for there is no forgiveness for the unforgiving. How awful does this prayer become in the mouth of one who forgives not such as have wronged him. It can in such case have no other meaning than 'Forgive *not* me.'

k ch. 26. 41. Luke 22. 40, 46. 1 Cor. 10. 13. 2 Pet. 2. 9. Rev. 3. 10. 1 John 17. 15.
m 1 Chr. 29. 11.
n Mark 11. 25, 26. Eph. 4. 32. Col. 3. 13.
o ch. 18. 35. Jam. 2. 13.

13 k And lead us not into temptation, but l deliver us from evil: m For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

14 n For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:

15 but o if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

13. "**And lead us not into temptation.**" God tempts not (See St. James i. 13.), but He suffers us to be tempted. This is necessary for our trial. Sometimes the temptation, by which God suffers us to be tried, is very hard to bear. We have to pass, as it were, through the fire. But it is never really harder than we can bear (See 1 Cor. x. 13.). Still, knowing our frailty, we pray that we may be saved from such temptations as we fear might cause us to fall. "The Lord ordereth a good man's going" (Ps. xxxvii. 23.), and what we ask in this petition is that God would so order our going in the midst of all the snares and dangers of this world as not to let us fall into great temptation, but to lead our steps aside from that which would imperil our souls. To say these words, and then to put ourselves knowingly in the way of temptation, is fearful mockery and hypocrisy.

"**But deliver us from evil.**" Literally, 'from *the evil one*,' that is, the devil, the prince and author of evil. This shows us that "evil" in this petition is moral or spiritual evil, and not bodily evil. It is well explained in the Catechism in the words "That He will keep us from all "sin and wickedness, and from our ghostly enemy, and from everlasting "death."

"**For Thine is the kingdom,**" **&c.** We often let the words of this doxology pass our lips as a mere form, without thinking of their singular suitableness. Observe how they ascribe to God that "kingdom," for the coming of which we have prayed; that "power," trusting to which we have asked for all we need; and that "glory," which belongs to Him alone, of whom, and through whom, and to whom, are all things. St. Paul gives us a striking instance of a doxology following upon words very similar to the last petition of the Lord's Prayer: "The Lord shall deliver me "from every evil work, and will preserve me unto His heavenly king-"dom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen" (2 Tim. iv. 18.).

14. "**If ye forgive**" **&c.** In these verses our Lord explains more fully the only part of His Prayer which seemed to need explanation, and again solemnly enforces it. Compare St. Mark xi. 25., which seems

13. "*For Thine*" *&c.* It is perhaps right to state that doubts are thrown upon the genuineness of this Doxology, which is not found in some very ancient copies of St. Matthew's Gospel. Yet the weight of proof is certainly on the side of its genuineness. See *Note* on Rev. xix. 1. As the Lord's Prayer in St. Luke xi. 2—4. was certainly given on a different occasion, there is no reason why our Lord may not have added the Doxology on the one occasion, and not on the other.

With regard to the use of the Doxology with the Lord's Prayer in the services of our Church, we may observe that it was never used in the old services before the Reformation, and is never used now in the Roman Church. It is found however in very ancient Greek offices; and was added to the Lord's Prayer at the last revision of the Prayer-Book in 1661 at the beginning of the Daily Morning and Evening Prayer, where we are just about to engage in Praise, in the Communion Office after the Reception, and in the Office of Churching of Women. Thus the Doxology is most fittingly used in those parts of the service which are of a joyful and eucharistic character, while it is omitted in the more solemn and penitential portions, as in the Litany and Burial Service.

16 ¶ Moreover [p] when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. A. D. 28. [p] Isai. 58. 5.

17 But thou, when thou fastest, [q] anoint thine head, and wash thy face; [q] Ruth 3. 3. Dan. 10. 3.

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to shew that the act of forgiving others may take place at the very time of our seeking forgiveness for ourselves. But we must remember that the truth and genuineness of such forgiveness can and will be tested by our after conduct. The words of the "Son of Sirach" are very striking, "Forgive thy neighbour the hurt that he hath done unto "thee, so shall thy sins also be forgiven when thou prayest. One man "beareth hatred against another, and doth he seek pardon from the "Lord? He sheweth no mercy to a man, which is like himself: and "doth he ask forgiveness of his own sins?" (Ecclus. xxviii. 2—4.)

16—18. Fasting.

16. "When ye fast." The third example of outward religious duties; the second, that of prayer, having been prolonged by the introduction of the Lord's Prayer. It is very remarkable that fasting is here spoken of exactly in the same terms as almsgiving and prayer, as an acknowledged religious duty. Surely in these self-indulgent days we neglect this means of grace very sadly. This is not the fault of our Church, which clearly enjoins fasting, and appoints the days for it. It is well to understand both what fasting is, and what is its use. Fasting is the denial to ourselves of lawful and ordinary indulgence. *In the letter* fasting is abstinence in eating and drinking; and this may be in quantity, or in quality, or in both. *In the spirit* fasting may be extended to all usual and lawful indulgences, such as going into company, light reading, and pleasure seeking of all sorts; or again, to the undertaking of tasks which require some sacrifice of time or convenience, such as adding to the length of our ordinary prayers and reading of God's word, devoting certain time to the visiting of the sick, or other labours of love. The use of fasting is two-fold. 1. To subdue the flesh to the spirit. (See the Collect for the First Sunday in Lent.) "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the "spirit against the flesh" (Gal. v. 17.); and all subduing and keeping under of the flesh is helping to gain the victory for the spirit. Moreover the subduing of the flesh is a great help towards the resistance of temptation. For certainly those who learn to curb and restrain themselves in things lawful are far more able to do so in things unlawful. 2. The second use of fasting is to fit the mind for devotion. No one can doubt that the soul is more free and active for prayer and meditation when restraint has been put upon the appetite, than when free indulgence has been given to it. Heaviness of body is a sore hindrance to activity of spirit.

The error against which our Lord warns us in this place is that of making fasting a mere formal outward act, as though it were good and meritorious *in itself*, and not simply a means of grace. They that fast in mere formality, and for the praise of men, are "hypocrites," like the Pharisees. The true Christian will fast, but he will never make a display of it. True, he will not be ashamed of it, but he will so fast that God, and not man, may see and approve.

A. D. 28.

18 that thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

[r] Prov. 23. 4. 1 Tim. 6. 17. Heb. 13. 5. Jam. 5. 1, &c.

19 ¶ [r] Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

[s] ch. 19. 21. Luke 12. 33, 34. & 18. 22. 1 Tim. 6. 19. 1 Pet. 1. 4.

20 [s] but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

21 for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

18. "That thou appear not unto men." Comparing this with v. 16, which bids us let our light shine before men, we may frame this rule for our guidance: 'Do openly whatever is commanded, that men may 'glorify God: do secretly all else, that men may not glorify thee.'

From the seventeenth verse of the fifth chapter to this point our new and heavenly Law-giver has been shewing how He came, not to destroy, but to *fulfil* the Law—to pour into it, and draw out from it, its true and full and perfect meaning. In all the examples He has brought forward He has shewn distinctly how the Law is to be understood by His disciples *in the spirit* and not in the letter; and thus how their righteousness must exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees.

From this point the Divine Teacher passes to more general instruction, though all of it closely connected with what has gone before, all of it marked by the same great leading idea, all of it spoken with the same great all-embracing aim,—namely, the exalting and spiritualizing of human life and actions.

19—23. Heavenly Treasure, and a Single eye.

19. "Lay not up" &c. The counsel to lay up "treasures in heaven" flows most naturally from the "*reward*" spoken of in the last three examples. It is as if Jesus had said, 'I have bidden you in the three great outward 'duties—alms-giving prayer and fasting—to seek your reward not of man 'but of God. I now make My command yet wider and more general. 'I bid you *in all things* to lay up treasures not on earth but in heaven.'

"Moth and rust." The Jews, as we know, often had their wealth in the shape of large stores of valuable raiment. The "moth" would destroy this, as the "rust" would the hoarded coin.

"Thieves break through." Literally, 'dig through.' This was a frequent mode by which thieves got into houses built with mere clay, the walls of which would be easily dug through.

20. "Treasures." In this word plainly lies the point of the whole command. By it is meant that upon which our hearts are set,—that for the sake of which we live and labour. The image is borrowed from actual treasure—money and possessions. But the lesson is by no means to be limited to this. All worldly objects of love and desire are "treasures "upon earth." And all quickly perish. "The world passeth away, and "the lust thereof" (1 St. John ii. 17.).

21. "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." This is the reason for the foregoing command. Christ would have our treasure lifted up from earth to heaven, that our hearts may be lifted up

22 [t] The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. A.D. 28. [t] Luke 11. 34, 36.

23 But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great *is* that darkness!

24 ¶ [u] No man can serve two masters: for either he [u] Luke 16. 13.

too. For the heart is sure to follow the treasure. 'Why,' asks St. Augustine, 'does Christ desire that thou change the place of thy treasure, 'except that thou mayest change the place of thy heart? For a man's 'treasure is only that which his heart careth for. It is the loadstar which 'will of necessity draw the heart and affections after it. It is impossible 'for a man to have his treasure upon earth and his heart in heaven.'

22. "The light of the body is the eye." It is not very easy at first sight to trace the link which binds this passage to that which has gone before. Perhaps the course of thought may be as follows:—The heart follows the treasure, and, according as it is set on earth or on heaven, guides governs and forms the whole inward character. So it is with the eye. The eye conveys the light to the body, and by it the body moves and is guided. If the eye be "single" (that is, pure, straight, unclouded), then the light of heaven floods in by that window, and all is bright; but if the eye be "evil" (that is, dim, crooked, polluted), then the light cannot pass through it, and all is dark. But this is a parable. The eye means the heart. The body means the inner world of feelings, affections, impulses, character. If then the heart is set on treasures above, it is like a clear open eye, filling the soul with heavenly light. If it is set on treasures below, it is like a befouled window, and shuts out the light it is meant to convey. And if the very eye and window and lamp of the soul is dark, then how dark must the darkness there be!

24—34. Trust in God.

St. Luke xii. 22—31.

24. "No man can serve two masters." This springs very clearly from the foregoing. It is a very ready thought, when we read of the treasures on earth and in heaven, to say to ourselves, 'Surely I need 'not give up all the one to secure the other. Can I not have both?' This thought then Jesus now meets. He says, 'No, you cannot have both. 'You must choose where you will have your treasure, and which shall be 'your master. The heart must go one way or the other.' By "mammon" is meant riches; and we have a beautiful confirmation of the truth of this verse in the parable of the Sower, where the good seed, struggling with the thorns, is a picture of the heart in which an attempt is made to "serve God and mammon." We read there that "the care of this world, "and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word" (xiii. 22.). And it is most certain that where some attempt is made to serve God, at the same time that the love of mammon ("treasures upon earth") is suffered to dwell in the heart, the latter will grow the more strongly, and will end in choking the former, and filling the whole heart. Let us only note farther, that to give up the love of earthly treasures, and the service of mammon, (which indeed we have all vowed to "renounce,") is not to lose that happiness in this world which a gracious Father permits, and of which godliness has the promise (See on xix. 23.).

A. D. 28.

will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will
x Gal. 1. 10. 1 Tim. 6. 17. James 4. 4. 1 John 2. 15. hold to the one, and despise the other. x Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

25 Therefore I say unto you, y Take no thought for
y Ps. 55. 22. Phil. 4. 6. 1 Pet. 5. 7. your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

z Job 38. 41. Ps. 147. 9. 26 z Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?

27 Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?

28 And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:

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25. "Therefore." That is, because "ye cannot serve God and mammon."

"Take no thought." Literally, 'Be not over anxious.' It seems that to '*take thought*,' at the time of the translation of our Bible, had a stronger meaning than it has now, and implied (as the word used by St. Matthew does) anxious care. We thus see clearly that over anxiety and carefulness about even necessary worldly things is a serving of mammon (See on St. Luke x. 41.). [This applies to the expression as repeated in verses 31 and 34.]

"Is not the life more than meat?" This is one reason against over anxiety as to food or clothing. God has given us that most mysterious gift—*life*, and bestowed on us these frames so "fearfully and wonderfully "made," and shall we not trust Him for the lesser gifts? May there not also be a reproof in these words to such (alas! no small number) as, by their devotion to good fare and fine dressing, would seem to believe that they lived only to eat and drink, and had bodies only to deck them with grand clothing?

26. "Your heavenly Father." Notice the force of the word "*your*." It is not *their* heavenly Father, but "*your*." This adds another thought to the comparison. If your Father takes such care of the birds and flowers, His lower creatures, will He not do much more for you, His own *children?*

28. "The lilies." We cannot tell what particular flower our Lord here speaks of. Several very beautiful flowers of the lily tribe grow wild in Palestine.

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27. "*Stature.*" Most probably this should be 'length of life,' and not "stature." The original word may mean either; but to add a cubit (that is, eighteen inches) to one's height would be so great an addition that our Lord could hardly have used it as an example of a *little* thing (Observe in St. Luke xii. 26. it is described as "that thing "which is least."). If, however, our life be regarded as a race or journey, the length of which is known to and appointed by God, it is a very natural thing for our Lord to say that we cannot prolong this our course by even one cubit; or, as we should say, lengthen our life by a span.

29 and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. A. D. 28.

30 Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, *shall He* not much more *clothe* you, O ye of little faith?

31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

32 (for after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

33 But [b]seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

[b] See 1 Kings 3. 13. Ps. 37. 25. Mark 10. 30. 1 Tim. 4. 8.

34 Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day *is* the evil thereof.

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29. "Solomon in all his glory." We have another lesson here. Not only does God's care for the clothing of the flowers teach us that He will much more clothe us His own children; but also the exceeding beauty of that clothing reads us a lesson of the vanity of love of dress; for, care and strive as we may, we can never vie with God's handywork.

30. "The grass." That is, the whole herbage of the field, in which the wild flowers are included. Wood being scarce in Palestine, hay was, and is still, used for firing.

32. "The Gentiles." The word Gentile means foreigner, and was used by the Jews for all other nations. We must remember that the Gentiles in our Lord's time were also heathen. Thus His meaning is, that anxiety about worldly things is only befitting those foreign nations who know not God nor His love and providence.

33. "Seek ye first." This does not mean 'Seek first those heavenly 'things, and then you may seek afterwards those earthly things'; but, 'Make these heavenly things *at all times* your *first* and chief care, and 'then God will give you the other.'

"His righteousness." We must not interpret this "righteousness" in the narrower sense given to the word by St. Paul (as in Rom. iii.), who uses it in the sense of justification (See on v. 6.). Here it is to be taken in its simpler and more usual sense, as meaning holiness,—that holiness which is a special attribute of God, and which God imparts through His Spirit to His children.

34. "The morrow shall take thought" &c. After all there will be cares and troubles. We may cast them upon God; but we cannot wholly escape from them. Only let us take care they do not fill and vex and discompose our souls. And let us take care that we do not needlessly add to them by bringing to-morrow's upon those of to-day. Each day's burden is sufficient. And God gives strength to bear it. But there is no promise of strength to bear to-day's and to-morrow's

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CHAPTER VII.

1 *Christ ending His sermon in the mount, reproveth rash judgment,* 6 *forbiddeth to cast holy things to dogs,* 7 *exhorteth to prayer,* 13 *to enter in at the strait gate,* 15 *to beware of false prophets,* 21 *not to be hearers, but doers of the word:* 24 *like houses builded on a rock,* 26 *and not on the sand.*

[a] Rom. 2. 1. & 14. 3, 4, 10, 13. 1 Cor. 4. 3, 5. Jam. 4. 11, 12.
[b] Mark 4. 24.

JUDGE [a] not, that ye be not judged.
2 For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: [b] and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.
3 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy

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burdens at once. The only way to make all these earthly burdens light is to throw into the other scale the weight of the heavenly treasures. He that ever seeks and cares for these first finds earthly troubles strangely lessened.

CHAPTER VII.

1—6. Charity and wisdom in dealing with others.

St. Luke vi. 37—42.

1. There seems a marked break in our Lord's discourse at the end of the 6th chapter. Still we doubt not that the Sermon on the Mount, as recorded by St. Matthew, was a single and continuous discourse, spoken at one time and place. Thus we naturally seek to trace a connection between its several parts and subjects. Nor need we seek far to find such connection. For, first of all, there is that general link which binds the whole together, and which has been pointed out above, namely, the exalting and spiritualizing of human life and actions (See on vi. 18.): and, secondly, there is that more special link which we find in the object laid down by our Lord at an early stage of His sermon, and which more or less runs through it to the end, namely, the showing how the Christian's righteousness must exceed the formal and hypocritical righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees (See on v. 20.).

The Christian's righteousness must be true, humble, spiritual. To enforce this our Lord now turns to the way in which men should regard one another, and treat one another.

"**Judge not.**" This means, 'Judge not harshly and uncharitably,' or simply, 'Condemn not.'

"**That ye be not judged.**" That is, by God. It has been thought by some that the meaning is, 'that ye be not judged or condemned by God '*for that your harsh judgment of others.*' As if it were only 'Do not 'bring sin and condemnation on yourselves by your uncharitable thoughts 'or words towards others.' Surely this limits and narrows the meaning far too much. It seems far more natural to understand the words as teaching us that those who deal hard measure to others must expect to be dealt hardly with themselves, while the merciful may hope to find mercy. [Compare the parable of the Unmerciful Servant, xviii. 28—35.]

3. "**The mote**" and "**the beam.**" This short parable is closely linked with the foregoing verses, and is spoken to show one great reason for judging others charitably. The "mote" is a little speck or grain of

brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? A. D. 28.

4 Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam *is* in thine own eye?

5 Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

6 [c] Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.

[c] Prov. 9. 7, 8. & 23. 9. Acts 13. 45, 46.

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dust, the "beam" a large piece of wood; and the words seem to have been used by the Jews in a common saying or proverb, upon which our Lord founds His instruction, thus "bringing forth out of His treasure "things new and old" (xiii. 52.). The lesson is very clear. It teaches us the vanity of trying to reprove and correct little faults in others while we have great faults uncorrected in ourselves. This is the folly they fall into who "judge" others hardly. They forget to 'look at home first,' and to think how great and crying their own sins are. This alone would make them meek and charitable in judging others.

5. "Thou hypocrite." Hypocrisy is acting a part,—making ourselves different in the eyes of men to that which we really are (See on vi. 2.). But it is not always wilful and knowing deception. Most hypocrites deceive themselves as well as others. And no doubt this was greatly the case with the Pharisees. So too here. When a man with great faults begins to find fault with others, he very often has no knowledge of his own faults, and thinks himself well-fitted to set others right. But he is no less a hypocrite. For by taking upon himself to correct others he is setting up for a faultless person himself. And thus he is untrue, putting on a character for goodness to which he has no right, a deceiver of himself and others, and a hypocrite. When we would judge another, even the most wicked and depraved, there are two questions we should not fail to ask ourselves: 1. 'Can I tell that my sins, judged by my light and knowledge and 'education and circumstances and amount of temptation, are not greater 'in God's sight than his?' 2. 'Can I tell that, had I been brought up as 'he has been, placed in his position, possessed of his natural character and 'disposition, taught no better than he, exposed to his temptations and 'bad influences, I should have been any better than he?' These are very wholesome and very humbling thoughts, and may well save us from the hypocrisy our Lord condemns.

6. "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs." In the last verse our Lord showed that it might be a duty and privilege to pull the mote out of a brother's eye. Brotherly counsel and reproof are good if coming from one who may rightly offer them. The present verse goes still farther. It is as if our Lord had said, 'When you have purged your own heart from 'sin, then you may offer kindly counsel to others. But there must be a 'care, not only *from* whom, but also *to* whom, such counsel is given.' A good man may be unwise in his bestowal of godly advice and holy warning. There are some no better than dogs and swine, on whom the most

A. D. 28.

7 ¶ [d] Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

8 for [e] every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

9 Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?

10 Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?

11 If ye then, [f] being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him?

12 Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that

d ch. 21. 22. Mark 11. 24. Luke 18. 1. John 14. 13. & 15. 7. & 16. 23, 24. Jam. 1. 5, 6. 1 John 3. 22. & 5. 14, 15.

e Prov. 8. 17. Jer. 29. 12, 13.

f Gen. 6. 5. & 8. 21.

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precious words would be thrown away. It is only to bring contempt on holy things to speak sacred truths to such.

7—12. God's Fatherly love in answering prayer.
St. Luke xi. 9—13.

7. Here again there seems a break in the discourse. But perhaps the course of thought may be as follows. A humble hearer might feel, 'If 'holy things are not to be given to those unfit to receive them, what hope 'have I of receiving any good thing from God? I am no better than a 'dog in His sight, not worthy to gather up the crumbs under His table.' So our Lord at once pours comfort and hope on such an one.

"Ask, and it shall be given you." This is indeed a glorious and most blessed promise. Would that we all had more faith to believe it. It seems that the three words, "Ask," "seek," "knock," imply three degrees of prayer, increasing in eagerness and earnestness. There are two things which must not be forgotten in considering this promise. It is guarded by two conditions, one on God's side and one on ours. 1. On God's side, the promise is guarded by the following verses, which teach us that it is only that which is *for our good* that God will give in answer to our prayers. 2. On our side, the promise is guarded by the saying of St. James (iv. 3.), which shows that it is only made to true and right prayers, "Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask *amiss*."

11. "Being evil." That is, sharing in the sinfulness and ignorance of human nature. If men, full of human infirmity as they are, will give their children what is for their good, how much more the all-holy, all-wise, all-loving, God? This comparison is made much more strongly in the short parables of the Friend at Midnight and the Unjust Judge (St. Luke xi. 5—8, and xviii. 1—8.), where the argument is,—If *ungracious* and *unjust* men will grant petitions because of much asking, how much more will the merciful and just God grant His people's prayers.

"Good things." Chiefly His Holy Spirit, and spiritual gifts. (See St. Luke xi. 13, and St. James i. 5.)

12. "Therefore." Because God is so good to you. Here is the great law of acting towards another, as in verse 1 we had the law of thinking and speaking of another. The rule (alas how rarely followed!) is, to place ourselves in the other's position, and to ask ourselves '*What should I, in that position like done to me?*', and then to do that to the other.

men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for A. D. 28.
[g] this is the law and the prophets.

[g] Lev. 19. 18. ch. 22. 40. Rom. 13. 8, 9, 10. Gal. 5. 14. 1 Tim. 1. 5.

13 ¶ [h] Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

[h] Luke 13. 24.

14 [2] because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

[2] Or, *how.*

The world would be a different place from what it is were men to act by this golden rule.

"This is the law and the prophets." That is, This rule embraces all that the law and the prophets can teach as to our duty towards our neighbour. It is a like saying to that of St. Paul, "Love is the fulfilling "of the law" (Rom. xiii. 10.). Observe the connection of these words with the verse, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the "prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil" (v. 17.); which verse was shown to be the key-note to the greater part of this wonderful sermon.

13, 14. The Strait Gate.

13. Again there is a seeming break in the discourse; as though our Lord were turning to an entirely new subject. But in truth He is now drawing His holy lessons to a conclusion; and we may look upon the remainder of the Sermon on the Mount as a summing up and crowning of the whole. What then shall embrace all lessons of spiritual righteousness in one? What shall, in a word, declare the purity and heavenliness of that righteousness which must exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees? The "strait gate"—the "narrow way."

"Enter ye in." Then we *can* enter in, if we will. Christ would not command what we cannot do. But we can do nothing of ourselves. True; then listen to another word spoken by the same Divine lips: "I am the "*Way* . . . No man cometh unto the Father but by Me" (St. John xiv. 6.). Thus, just as it is written, "Work out your own salvation . . . for "it is God that worketh in you" (Phil. ii. 12, 13.); so does Jesus say, "Enter ye in at the strait gate"—for "I am the way."

"Strait." This is nearly the same as "narrow," and may be well understood by the use of the word as applied to the narrow channel or passage between two seas formed by projecting headlands on either side.

"Gate." What gate is this? The gate that stands at the beginning of the "way" and admits into it? Or the gate that stands at the end of the "way" and opens into heaven? Probably the former, as the order of the words seems to show, the "gate," in both this and the next verses, coming before the "way." What then does the gate mean? It can only mean the deliberate choice, and entrance upon, one or other of the two great ways in which men walk. In the one case it is the taking up the cross to follow Christ; in the other it is the following the multitude to do evil.

14. "Few." That is, by comparison with those who enter the broad

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14. "*Because.*" The other reading "how", given in the margin, has not much to recommend it. There is little doubt that "because" is the true reading.

A. D. 28. 15 ¶ [i]Beware of false prophets, [k]which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are [l]ravening wolves.

16 [m]Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

[i] Deut. 13. 3. Jer. 23. 16. ch. 24. 4, 5, 11, 24. Mark 13. 22. Rom. 16. 17. Eph. 5. 6. Col. 2. 8. 2 Pet. 2. 1, 2, 3. 1 John 4. 1. [k] Mic. 3. 5. 2 Tim. 3. 5. [l] Acts 20. 29, 30. [m] ver. 20. ch. 12. 33.

way. But *not* few in themselves, for the redeemed whom St. John saw in his vision were "a great multitude, which no man could number, of all "nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues" (Rev. vii. 9.). Moreover, if "few," by comparison with those who walk in the broad way, find the strait gate and "the way which leadeth unto life"; how comforting is the sure promise—"Seek, and ye *shall find*" (7.).

15—20. False prophets and their fruits.

St. Luke vi. 43—45.

15. "False prophets." The word 'prophet' is not confined in Holy Scripture to one who foretells things to come, but is used for any teacher of divine truths, especially any *inspired* teacher. The warnings against false teachers are most clear and abundant in God's word. Here our Lord seems to bring in the warning in consequence of what He has said as to the two Ways. There will be teachers, He implies, professing to lead you in this narrow way, who will really lead you astray. Of such beware.

"In sheep's clothing." That is, with all the manner and appearance of innocence and purity.

"Ravening wolves." That is, destroying your souls, as wolves destroy the flock. Are we to suppose our Saviour to speak of false teachers so frightfully wicked as to make a pretence of goodness *on purpose* to injure and destroy men's souls? This is scarcely likely; for such dreadful hypocrisy and malice could hardly exist. He rather speaks of the *effects* than of the *intention* of these "false prophets." Such teachers may be "false" in two ways: either, 1, as regards the motive and purpose of their teaching; or, 2, as regards the truth of that which they teach. Of the former sort are such as take upon themselves the office of teaching, and the ministry of God's word, from pride, or love of power, or for "filthy lucre" (1 Tim. iii. 3.), and only to earn a livelihood. These may teach the truth, but are none the less "false" teachers. Of the latter sort are such as believe what they teach, and purpose to do good by their teaching, but, being in error themselves, lead others astray, and are thus "false" teachers. The one are false-hearted teachers of true things; the other honest teachers of false things. Of both sorts let all faithful Christians beware.

16. "Ye shall know them by their fruits." This is the best test we can have of the trust-worthiness of a teacher. Not that a skilful hypocrite may not deceive us for a long time even here. But, as a rule, and in the long run, the false and untrustworthy teacher will show himself in his life and character. Only let us take care that, if we must judge him, we judge by the true test, and look for the right fruits. What these are St. Paul tells us: "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, "long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." (Gal. v. 22, 23.). And again: "The fruit of the Spirit is in all good-"ness and righteousness and truth" (Eph. v. 9.). This last word suggests

17 Even so [n]every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A. D. 28.
[n] Jer. 11. 19. ch. 12. 33.

18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither *can* a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

19 [o]Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.
[o] ch. 3. 10. Luke 3. 9. John 15. 2, 6.

20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

21 ¶ Not every one that saith unto Me, [p]Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven.
[p] Hos. 8. 2. ch. 25. 11, 12. Luke 13. 25. Acts 19. 13. Rom. 2. 13. James 1. 22.

22 Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we [q]not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works?
[q] Num. 24. 4. John 11. 51. 1 Cor. 13. 2.

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a warning that holiness of life is not the only fruit we must look for. If the teacher, who professes to teach God's truth, teaches anything contrary to that truth, he is known "*by his fruits*" to be a "false prophet," for "truth" is one of the fruits.

21—27. No safety but in obedience.

St. Luke vi. 46—49.

21. "Lord, Lord." By this is meant any holy and pious language. It is not those who *talk* well, but those who *do* well, who shall be saved. Though this refers chiefly to the *teachers*, of whom our Lord is speaking, yet it carries a most needful warning to all, that what God requires is not profession, but practice. How wisely has this sentence been placed among those to be read at the Offertory by the Church, as though to say, 'Ye, who have joined in the prayers, and listened to the preaching, take 'care that ye be not satisfied with mere words. Now prove by your *acts* 'that ye love and serve the Lord.'

22. "In Thy name." God suffers His gifts to be often conveyed by unworthy instruments. No doubt even Judas Iscariot wrought miracles and prophesied in Christ's name. And our Church is careful to teach her children that "the effect of Christ's ordinance is not taken away by "the wickedness of the minister, nor the grace of God's gifts diminished "from such as by faith and rightly do receive the Sacraments ministered "unto them; which be effectual, because of Christ's institution and "promise, although they be ministered by evil men" (Art. xxvi.). This verse should be a very serious one to all who are engaged in any holy work. Besides ordained ministers of the Gospel, will there be no teachers in Sunday-schools, no district-visitors, no singers in churches, who "*in that day*" may say, 'Lord, Lord, have we not taught in Thy 'name, and ministered to Thy sick and poor, and sung Thy praises in 'Thy holy house?' to whom He may make answer "I never knew you"?

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18. "*A good tree cannot bring forth evil "fruit*," *&c.* As certain errors have been founded upon, or defended by, this verse, it is well to explain that it in no way declares that a good tree may not *become* bad, or a bad one good. Such a question is not touched at all by the verse, which simply means that, *while* a tree is good, it cannot bear bad fruit, and, *while* it is bad, it cannot bear good fruit.

A. D. 28.

23 And [r] then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: [s] depart from Me, ye that work iniquity.

24 Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of Mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:

25 and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

26 And every one that heareth these sayings of Mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:

27 and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

[r] ch. 25. 12. Luke 13. 25, 27. 2 Tim. 2. 19.
[s] Ps. 5. 5. & 6. 8. ch. 25. 41.

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23. "**I never knew you.**" That is, 'I never knew you *as Mine*'. For "the Lord knoweth them that are His" (2 Tim. ii. 19.).

24. "**Therefore.**" Partly in close connection with the passage before. '*Because* it will be so fearful a thing at the last day to have been a mere 'professor of religion and self-deceived, *therefore* behold the difference 'between the hearer and the doer of My words.' But partly also as a grand summing up and conclusion of the whole sermon; as though the meaning were: 'I have shown you now how I am come not to destroy, 'but to fulfil, the law: I have shown you how to trace out its spirit and 'purity and fulness: I have taught you how your righteousness must 'exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees: I have warned 'you against all formalism and hypocrisy and self-deceit. **Therefore**,—as 'a last weighty lesson, to crown all and fix it in your minds,—**There**-'fore behold the difference between the hearer and the doer of My 'words.'

"**A rock.**" We can hardly doubt that in this word our Lord made reference to Himself. At any rate, we need not fear so to apply it. St. Paul says "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which "is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. iii. 11.). He that builds on this foundation builds his house upon a Rock. In the passage before us our Lord is showing the difference between the man who makes obedience to His sayings the foundation of his building, and the man who, despising this the only sure and safe foundation, builds upon his own foolish fancies or his own perverse will. In the passage above quoted from the first Epistle to the Corinthians the Apostle is drawing quite a different comparison. He is there showing that, even taking the one true foundation for granted, men may build up very differently upon it. Thus the Apostle's lesson follows well after his Lord's. The Master says, 'Let every man 'take heed that he buildeth upon the true foundation.' The servant adds, "But let every man take heed *how* he buildeth thereupon."

25. "**Rain**"—"**floods**"—"**winds.**" These may signify the temptations and trials of this life: for these will prove the stedfastness of the building. Thus they would answer to the hot sun in the parable of the Sower, which scorched and killed the seed growing in the shallow soil on the rock, and which our Lord explains to mean "tribulation," "persecu-

28 ¶ And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, [t] the people were astonished at His doctrine: A. D. 28.

[t] ch. 13. 54. Mark 1. 22. & 6. 2. Luke 4. 32.

29 [u] for He taught them as *one* having authority, and not as the scribes.

[u] John 7. 46.

CHAPTER VIII.

2 *Christ cleanseth the leper,* 5 *healeth the centurion's servant,* 14 *Peter's mother in law,* 16 *and many other diseased:* 18 *sheweth how He is to be followed:* 23 *stilleth the tempest on the sea,* 28 *driveth the devils out of two men possessed,* 31 *and suffereth them to go into the swine.*

WHEN He was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed Him.

2 And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped

"tion," and "temptation" (xiii. 21. and St. Luke viii. 13.). But these words may also describe the searching trial of the last day, when the building will be either secure or ruined for ever (Compare the "fire" in 1 Cor. iii. 13.). This latter meaning perhaps accords best with the solemn concluding words, "It fell; and great was the fall of it." Great and awful indeed will be the ruin and desolation which in the day of the Lord will overtake the foolish builder on the sand!

28, 29. Effect of Sermon.

28. "The people were astonished." This astonishment seems to have been caused, partly at any rate, by the language of "authority" which Jesus used. The Scribes might explain and enforce the law according to their notions of its meaning. But it was quite new to hear One speaking with such power in His own name. Probably this "authority", so rightly His, was shown chiefly in the oft-repeated words, "But *I* say unto you" (See on v. 22.).

CHAPTER VIII.

1—4. The leper cleansed.

St. Mark i. 40—45. St. Luke v. 12—14.

1. In the last three chapters we have heard the wondrous *words* of Christ. In this and the next we behold His wondrous *works*. His words are confirmed by "signs following" (St. Mark xvi. 20.). Thus He says "If I do not the works of My Father believe Me not. "But if I do, though ye believe not Me, believe the works" (St. John x. 37, 38.). The people who had heard Him *speak* with "authority" (vii. 29.) were now to see Him *act* with like authority.

2. "A leper." Leprosy, though a most foul and offensive complaint, was not contagious, that is, it was not spread by the touch, as is sometimes supposed. So the law which obliged lepers to remain apart from others was not to prevent the spread of the disease, but had (like other ceremonial laws) a much deeper meaning. It was to teach

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1. "*A leper.*" The description of this terrible disease, as well as the laws concerning it, will be found in Lev. xiii, xiv. Examples of the complaint occur in Exod. iv. 6 Num. xii. 10. 2 Kin. v. 27. xv. 5. 2 Chron. xxvi. 19—21.

A.D. 28. Him, saying, Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean.

3 And Jesus put forth *His* hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

[a] ch. 9. 30. Mark 5. 43. 4 And Jesus saith unto him, [a] See thou tell no

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a spiritual truth; to picture and represent the foulness and defilement of sin. How fitly leprosy was a type of sin may be seen in the following description of the disease. "Leprosy was nothing short of a living "death, a poisoning of the springs, a corrupting of all the humours, "of life; a dissolution, little by little, of the whole body, so that one "limb after another actually decayed and fell away" (*Trench on the Miracles.*). Outwardly leprosy showed itself in a white eruption of the skin, together with sores, and sometimes it covered the whole body.

"Worshipped." St. Mark and St. Luke describe the very posture of this worship. It was "kneeling to Him," and "falling on his face." Now, although *worship* does not always of necessity imply that which is offered only to *God*, yet such lowly worship as this surely shows that this poor man looked upon Jesus as One of more than human greatness and power. Perhaps he had stood on the outskirts of the crowd, and listened to the Sermon on the Mount. Perhaps his faith had been aroused by former miracles which he had witnessed (See iv. 24.). At any rate he does not doubt Christ's *power* to heal. In approaching so near this poor leper broke the law, but the grace that drew him forgave him.

3. "Touched him." To touch the leper would have brought defilement on any other man. Now it carries cleansing to the defiled. So He, the All-pure and All-holy, scorns not to touch our sin-polluted nature, but by touching it brings to it healing and salvation.

"I will; be thou clean." Observe the dignity and majesty of these words. Those who marvelled at the "authority" before (vii. 29.) might well marvel now. If leprosy be a type of sin, must not this miracle (like many others) be also a *parable?* And, if so, how comforting a parable! Let the sin-stained penitent go in faith to the Saviour, and say, "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean": and the answer is spoken, "I will; be thou clean." "And *immediately* his "leprosy" is "cleansed."

4. "See thou tell no man." Our Lord frequently gives this command to those whom He has healed, though not always, for He commands the demoniac, of whose healing we read in this chapter (28—34.), to go and tell what had been done to him (St. Mark v. 19. St. Luke viii. 39.). One reason for the difference of the command on different occasions we can easily see. The fame of our Lord's miracles drew together crowds of people whose only motive for coming to Him was curiosity, and whose curiosity was a hindrance to His holy work and teaching. St. Mark almost expressly says (i. 45.) that this was the reason of the command to the healed leper in the text. In the case of the demoniac our Lord was not about to remain in the neighbourhood, so that the idle crowds could not impede Him. Perhaps another reason for the command of silence in the present case was that the Saviour might be known, not by mere startling acts of power, but by

man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, A.D. 28.
and offer the gift that [b] Moses commanded, for a [b] Lev. 14. 3, 4, 10.
testimony unto them.

5 ¶ And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto Him a centurion, beseeching Him,

6 and saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented.

7 And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him.

8 The centurion answered and said, Lord, [c] I am [c] Luke 15. 19, 21.
not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my
roof: but [d] speak the word only, and my servant [d] Ps. 107. 20.
shall be healed.

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the spiritual fruit of His divine words (See the important passage, xii. 16—20.).

"Shew thyself to the priest." The priest had the office of judging when a person was clean from leprosy, and of restoring him to the social position which, while a leper, he had lost (See Lev. xiv.).

"Offer the gift." Thankofferings for special mercies are thus sanctioned by God's word (See also St. Luke ii. 24.), as well as in accordance with our natural feelings and reason.

5—13. The centurion's servant healed.

St. Luke vii. 1—10.

5. "A centurion." That is, a Roman officer. Literally the word 'centurion' means the captain of a hundred men, but it came to be used generally of the captain of a regiment without regard to the actual number. No doubt this centurion was a proselyte, that is, a convert to the Jewish faith from heathenism; as was Cornelius, who, though a Gentile, and so no doubt brought up a heathen, yet worshipped the true God (See Acts x. 2.). That the centurion was also a very *zealous* proselyte we learn from St. Luke (vii. 5.), who tells us that he loved the Jewish nation and had built them a synagogue. We must not lose sight of the fact that all through the period of the Gospel history the Holy Land was under the power of the Romans. This fact meets us chiefly in the presence among the Jews of Roman governors and soldiers, and in the existence of the despised and hated publicans, who, though Jews, gathered the taxes for their Roman conquerors.

This miracle is related more fully by St. Luke, who tells us that the centurion did not come in person to make his petition to our Lord, but, not esteeming himself worthy to approach Him, sent certain "elders of the Jews" to plead his cause for him. It is a common mode of speech to represent a person as doing himself what he really does by others.

8. "I am not worthy." St. Augustine says, "In declaring himself "unworthy that Christ should enter within his walls, he proved "himself worthy that Christ should enter within his heart." And again,

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5. "*Capernaum.*" See on ch. iv. 13.

A.D. 28. 9 For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this *man*, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth *it*.

10 When Jesus heard *it*, He marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.

e Gen. 12. 3. Isai. 2. 2, 3. & 11. 10. Mal. 1. 11. Luke 13. 29. Acts 10. 45. & 11. 18. & 14. 27. Rom. 15. 9, &c. Eph. 3. 6.

11 And I say unto you, That e many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.

f ch. 21. 43. g ch. 13. 42, 50. & 22. 13. & 24. 51. & 25. 30. Luke 13. 28. 2 Pet. 2. 17. Jude 13.

12 But f the children of the kingdom g shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

13 And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, *so* be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour.

"The lowlier a man is, the more can he contain. The hills throw off "the water: the valleys are filled."

9 "**I am a man under authority.**" That is, 'I am myself but a 'servant of others, under the authority of my superiors, yet I have 'only to command my soldiers and they obey me: *how much more* wilt 'Thou, who hast none over Thee, but art Thyself Lord of all, be 'obeyed when Thou speakest the word.' Observe the faith of this Roman officer to see in Jesus the true Lord and King of all things visible and invisible. He doubted not that Jesus could as readily order, not only angels and spirits, but even palsies and fevers, to go and come at His will, as he himself could command the soldiers under him (See on St. John iv. 50.).

10. "**Marvelled.**" Well might the Lord (who by His wonder shows Himself to us as very Man, humbling Himself to all human feelings and affections) marvel at a faith so true and clear as this centurion's. Among all His own nation He had not found such faith as this Gentile soldier's.

11. Many shall come." How clear a prophecy of the calling of the Gentiles, and their election into the Church of Christ! That Church was to be a "Catholic" Church, no longer a Church of one nation, but free to all. It is strange to find the Jews so slow to understand this truth, when the very promise to their father Abraham, that in him "all the families of the earth" should be blessed, declared it, and when the prophet Isaiah so repeatedly proclaimed it. (See Isaiah xi. 10. xlii. 6. xlix. 6. lx. 3.)

12. "**The children of the kingdom.**" Plainly not the same kingdom as that spoken of in the verse before. That was the *new* kingdom, the kingdom of Christ, the kingdom of heaven. This is the *old* kingdom, the kingdom of the Jews, the kingdom of the chosen people of God under the law. If so awful is the end of unbelieving *Jews*, what shall be the lot of unbelieving *Christians?*

14 ¶ And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, He saw [h] his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever. A.D. 28. [h] 1 Cor. 9. 5.

15 And He touched her hand, and the fever left her: and she arose, and ministered unto them.

16 [i] When the even was come, they brought unto Him many that were possessed with devils: and He cast out the spirits with *His* word, and healed all that were sick:

17 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, [k] **Himself took our infirmities, and bare *our* sicknesses.** [k] 1 Pet. 2. 24. Isai. 53. 4.

14—17. The healing of St. Peter's mother-in-law, and others.

St. Mark i. 29—34. St. Luke iv. 38—41.

15. "He touched her hand." From St. Luke we learn that Jesus also "*rebuked*" the fever. Here we have at once an example of the power of commanding diseases to which the centurion alludes (9.). Compare the exercise of the same divine power in rebuking the wind and the sea (26.), and the evil spirit (xvii. 18.).

"Ministered." That is, waited upon them (See on iv. 11.). This shows the completeness of the cure. A fever leaves great weakness behind it, as a storm of wind leaves the sea rough for some time; yet when Christ cured the fever there was no weakness, and when He stayed the storm there was perfect calm.

16. "When the even was come." Possibly because, as we learn from St. Mark, it was the Sabbath day, which ended, we know, at sunset; or possibly to avoid the heat of the day for the sick people.

17. "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." In our translation of this passage in the prophet Isaiah the words are "Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows," and St. Peter plainly refers to the same verse when he says that Christ "bare our *sins*." Thus we should naturally understand the words rather of Christ's suffering in His own Person the "griefs" and "sorrows" which were laid on Him through our "sins," than of His healing bodily "infirmities" and "sicknesses." But we have here an inspired interpretation of inspired words, and as such let us reverently seek to understand it. To do so we must first observe that the words "took" and "bare" do not mean (as has been sometimes thought) '*took away and removed*'; but simply 'carried' and 'suffered.' How then, it must be asked, did Christ Himself carry and suffer the sicknesses and afflictions which He removed from others? Surely by the depth and keenness of His sympathy. "In all their affliction He "was afflicted" (Isaiah lxiii. 9.). The constant sight of so much bodily

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14. "*His wife's mother.*" It is well to note the fact of St. Peter being a married man, as bearing on the practice of the Roman Church in compelling the clergy to be unmarried, although that Church professes to owe its origin to, and derive its powers from, St. Peter.

A.D. 28. 18 ¶ Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about Him, He gave commandment to depart unto the other side.

19 And a certain scribe came, and said unto Him, Master, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest.

20 And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air *have* nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay *His* head.

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misery, the fruit, as in His eyes it would ever distinctly appear, of man's sin and fall, would "press with a living pang into the holy soul "of the Lord Jesus" (*Trench.*). His going to and fro in the midst of a fallen world, surrounded with, and meeting, wherever He went, with, the signs and fruits of the fall from which He came to restore, would itself be the fulfilment of the prophet's words. It was sin everywhere, sin triumphing over soul and body, sin in its moral fruit of depravity and vice, sin in its physical fruit of pain and woe, which the Saviour saw, when He came, and which He bare for us.

18—22. Before crossing the lake, Jesus warns certain who would follow Him.

St. Luke ix. 57—60.

18. "The other side." That is, from Capernaum on the Western shore of the Sea of Galilee to the Eastern shore.

19. "A certain scribe." It seems from St. Luke that three men were desirous of following Christ, the third of the three not being mentioned by St. Matthew.

We can hardly doubt that this Scribe was moved by some selfish motive in his desire to follow Christ. Indeed in the answers given to the three men who desired to follow Him we have a remarkable instance of the manner in which the Lord ever spoke just those words which were most needed by those whom He addressed. The Scribe probably expected some worldly advantage in following Christ, and such expectation is at once crushed by our Lord in the following words.

20. "The foxes have holes," &c. How wonderfully affecting is this *homelessness* of Christ! Few words in all Scripture so completely picture to us the utter lowliness and humiliation of the everlasting Son of God. He was indeed "despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and "acquainted with grief." The Maker of the universe has no home wherein to rest His weary Head! The Bringer of peace and rest to all hearts that lean upon Him, has no peace or rest for His own sorrowing Heart. Days of labour, nights of prayer, love that could not but mourn, and pity that was full of grief, constant strivings with a world that would not understand, loneliness in a crowd, homelessness in the world He created—such is the picture we have of the human life of the Son

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19. The events here described seem to be placed by St. Luke in a later part of our Lord's life, namely, during His last journey to Jerusalem. This is one of those difficulties, (in themselves of no practical importance,) which our present knowledge does not enable us satisfactorily to solve (But see *Note* on the passage in St. Luke.).

21 And another of His disciples said unto Him, A.D. 28.
Lord, [1]suffer me first to go and bury my father.
22 But Jesus said unto him, Follow Me; and let the dead bury their dead.

[1] See 1 Kin. 19. 20.

23 ¶ And when He was entered into a ship, His disciples followed Him.
24 And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the

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of God. Yet even then these words of Christ "do not come out to us "in all their depth of meaning, till we realize that hour when upon "His cross He bowed His Head, not having where to lay it, and having "bowed it thus gave up the Ghost" (*Archbishop Trench.*).

Observe how Jesus here (as so often) calls Himself the "Son of Man." By this title did Daniel prophesy of Him (See Dan. vii. 13.), for was He not to be the second Adam, taking upon Himself our fallen nature that He might exalt it to heaven? This is the first time we meet with the expression in the Gospels, and we may well pause to note how constantly He, whom we should rather delight to honour as the "Son "of God," Himself delights to claim His brotherhood with us as the "Son of Man." "He *made Himself* of no reputation" (Phil. ii. 7.).

22. "Let the dead bury their dead." Again doubtless *the* answer needed by him to whom it was spoken. There is some little doubt as to the meaning of the request made to our Lord in this instance. Some imagine it to be made by one whose father was old, and to be a petition to be allowed to wait till his father was dead. This certainly takes away from the apparent harshness of the Saviour's answer. But it is probably best to accept the words in their more literal sense, and to understand that the father was really dead. In that case our Lord possibly knew that this disciple was one who was ready to seize excuses for putting on one side the self-denying work to which he had been called. The strange refusal to be allowed to do this work of piety would try this man's faith, as the strange command to Abraham to slay his son tried his. The words "Let the dead bury their dead" seem to be spoken as a sort of proverb, and mean, 'Let those who are still 'engrossed in this world attend to the things of this world.' In their application to the disciple to whom they were spoken they would mean, 'Let those who are still dead to the new life of the Spirit attend to this 'matter which is one of death. Let the dead in spirit care for him who 'is dead in body. There are enough to do this work. Thou art called 'to a work which will suffer no delay: "follow me"; and' (as St. Luke adds) '"go thou and preach the kingdom of God."'

23—27. The stilling of the tempest.

St. Mark iv. 35—41. St. Luke viii. 22—25.

24. "He was asleep." It has been well pointed out how great a contrast there is here with the sleep of Jonah in another storm. Jonah

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23. This miracle is related most fully by St. Mark, whose account of it should be carefully studied.

A.D. 28. sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but He was asleep.

25 And His disciples came to *Him*, and awoke Him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish.

26 And He saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then [m] He arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm.

m Ps. 65. 7. & 89. 9. & 107. 29.

27 But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him!

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sleeps from a hardened conscience; Jesus from a divine peace. Jonah by his presence brings the danger; Jesus by His presence brings the safety. It has also been beautifully remarked that, just as Noah and his family in the ark tossed upon the waves of the deluge were the seed and kernel of the old family of man, so Christ and His Apostles in the boat on the stormy waves of the Sea of Galilee were the seed and kernel of the new family of the Church of Christ. That Church has been ever tossed about by the storms of this world; but, helpless as she has often seemed, her Saviour was in her, and when the waves were roughest and the peril greatest He has been mighty to save with His "Peace, be still." He is still in His Church, and we are sure that "the "gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (xvi. 18.).

26. "Rebuked." St. Mark alone gives the words of this rebuke, "Peace; be still." How mightily does this rebuke of the elements, like that of the fever (St. Luke iv. 39.), display the Saviour as nature's God and King!

"A great calm." When the wind drops suddenly the sea is a long time before it becomes calm again. This was a sudden calm. Who can help remembering the words of the Psalmist, "O Lord God of Hosts, "who is like unto Thee? Thou rulest the raging of the sea: when the "waves thereof arise, Thou stillest them" (Psalm lxxxix. 8, 9.).

We may most fitly apply this beautiful miracle to ourselves individually. Do storms of trouble and distress threaten to engulf us? Or does the tempest of some strong temptation rage within us? Let us awake Jesus by our earnest cries for help, and He will rebuke the tempest, and bring a "great calm."

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25. "*Lord, save us, we perish.*" We have here an instance of a slight difference in the form of words given by the three Evangelists relating this miracle. St. Augustine (as quoted by Trench) speaks very wisely on the point, saying that we are not to look at the truth as tied down to only one form of expression, but to remember that the same thing may be told with equal and perfect truth in varied forms of language. The *meaning* of the cry of the terrified Apostles is in all three Evangelists the same. There is precisely the same sort of difference to be noticed in our Lord's words to His disciples concerning their faith. His "O ye of little "faith," and "How is it that ye have no "faith?" and "Where is your faith?" all express the same thought, that namely of wonder at the poverty and helplessness of their faith. We must also not forget that in truth none of the Evangelists give the exact words which our Lord spoke; for He would use the Syro-Chaldaic, that is, the popular language of Palestine at the time, whereas the Gospels were written in Greek, the language most widely known by all educated persons.

28 ¶ And when He was come to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes, there met Him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way. A.D. 28.

29 And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with Thee, Jesus, Thou Son of God? art Thou come hither to torment us before the time?

28—34. The healing of the Gadarene Demoniacs.

St. Mark v. 1—20. St. Luke viii. 26—39.

28. "Two." St. Mark and St. Luke speak only of one. There is nothing strange or difficult in this. It is easy to suppose that one of these miserable men was more conspicuous and more dangerous than the other, and that he was the one who came forward to converse with our Lord.

"Possessed with devils." This awful affliction was something different from, and more terrible than, mere madness. The time of our Lord's coming in the flesh was the time of Satan's greatest power. We cannot doubt, from the various Scriptural accounts of this dreadful possession, that the devil and his evil spirits were at that time enabled to exercise a power over the *body*, as well as the spirit, of man, which power Christ, in His triumph over the kingdom of darkness, took away, if not entirely, yet at least in its most terrible forms. The devil was the "strong man armed," but Christ was the "stronger than he," and so robbed him of his power. Observe how, when "the seventy returned "again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us "through Thy Name," "He said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven" (St. Luke x. 17, 18.). The account of this great miracle is recorded most fully by St. Mark, who describes most terribly the state of the wretched being who met Jesus on His landing.

"The tombs." These were caves in the rocks, disused tombs, such as even now often afford shelter to robbers and outcasts in the same country.

29. "To torment us before the time." Observe how "the devils "believe, and tremble" (St. James ii. 19.). They acknowledge Jesus as "Son of God." They are constrained even to *worship* Him (St. Mark v. 6.), no doubt in grovelling fear of His divine power. They speak of "the "time" when He will come to "torment" them, for they know that they are "reserved" "unto the judgment of the great day" (St. Jude 6.).

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28. "*Gergesenes.*" St. Mark and St. Luke say "Gadarenes." There is a good deal of difference as to the word in the ancient copies, and possibly "Gadarenes" is the correct reading in all three Gospels. Gadara lay at some little distance from the lake, but the part of the shore nearest to it might very well be spoken of as "the "country of the Gadarenes." There is no record of the existence of a place called Gergasa, but there may have been such a place, and, if so, a spot lying between that and Gadara might equally be spoken of as being in the neighbourhood of either. It has been suggested that a district between Gadara and the lake may have had the name of the "country of "the Gergesenes" (possibly from the ancient Gergashites, one of the Canaanitish tribes), and St. Matthew would from his former occupation in this very district be perfectly familiar with all such local names.

A.D. 28. 30 And there was a good way off from them an herd of many swine feeding.

31 So the devils besought Him, saying, If Thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine.

32 And He said unto them, Go. And when they were come out, they went into the herd of swine: and, behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters.

33 And they that kept them fled, and went their ways into the city, and told every thing, and what was befallen to the possessed of the devils.

34 And, behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus: and when they saw Him, [m] they besought *Him* that He would depart out of their coasts.

[m] See Deut. 5. 25. 1 Kin. 17. 18. Luke 5. 8. Acts 16. 39.

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31. "Suffer us to go away into the herd of swine." This request fills us with wonder. We know not how the evil spirits could take possession of the soul-less beasts. Yet we may perhaps see in the request that love of tormenting and destroying which the spirits were forbidden any longer to exercise upon man,—that senseless rage and despair with which they would flee any where from the face of their conquering Judge.

32. "Go." It is sometimes asked, How could our Lord permit such destruction of harmless beasts? Various reasons may be suggested. Perhaps it was that the healed man might have a visible proof of the going forth of the evil spirits from him. Indeed the immediate effect upon the swine would afford to all the by-standers a startlingly vivid proof of the reality and personal existence of those unseen spirits, concerning which many might have been disposed to doubt. Again, perhaps our Lord would prove the owners of the swine by taking from them worldly possessions that they might the more readily embrace the offer of heavenly. Perhaps too Jesus knew that the traffic in the swine was a snare to the Jews, who thereby were tempted to break the law of Moses, and despise those ordinances by which their obedience was tried.

34. "They besought Him that He would depart." "The country "seems to rise up to shake Him from them. Thus is He taken from "place to place at the call of duty, and as One already bearing the "cross on which He was to suffer; and driven from every place of His "choice by men who rejected Him" (*Isaac Williams*). We may trace in this (as the same thoughtful writer points out) one law which ruled our Lord's human conduct, namely a submission to all outward occasions and events. He flees from persecution; He does not overawe or prevent it. He leaves the unbelieving; He does not miraculously convert them. He bows to human necessities; He does not, as God, over-ride them. The keepers of the swine had "told everything," not their loss only, but also the miracle they had witnessed. How fearful then is this request of "the whole city"! They fear the loss of worldly possessions,

CHAPTER IX.

2 Christ curing one sick of the palsy, 9 calleth Matthew from the receipt of custom, 10 eateth with publicans and sinners, 14 defendeth His disciples for not fasting, 20 cureth the bloody issue, 23 raiseth from death Jairus' daughter, 27 giveth sight to two blind men, 32 healeth a dumb man possessed of a devil, 36 and hath compassion of the multitude.

AND He entered into a ship, and passed over, [a] and came into His own city. [a] ch. 4. 13.

2 And, behold, they brought to Him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: [b] and Jesus seeing [b] ch. 8. 10. their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.

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and so lose the heavenly. They value their wretched swine above the Saviour of the world. The men who had been the scourge and terror of the neighbourhood are cured. But they have lost the swine. And so they pray Jesus to depart. O blind worldliness! God give us grace gladly to lose all rather than lose the Saviour!

CHAPTER IX.

1—8. Healing of the paralytic man at Capernaum.

St. Mark ii. 1—12. St. Luke v. 17—26.

1. "His own city." This was Capernaum (See iv. 13.).

2. "Sick of the palsy." The original word is 'paralytic,' which is a stronger expression than "sick of the palsy." 'Palsy,' according to our modern use of the word, is simply the trembling and shaking of the limbs; 'paralysis' is the total loss of their use and power.

For a fuller account of this miracle we must study the parallel passages in St. Mark and St. Luke, in which we learn especially with what pains and trouble the poor sufferer was brought to Jesus.

"Seeing their faith." There is no reason why the faith here spoken of should not be that of the paralytic himself as much as that of his bearers. This faith was rendered visible by the anxious desire to gain approach to Christ. But He needed no such outward proof, as we learn in the fourth verse, where we find that He knew the unspoken thoughts of the Scribes. And throughout the Gospels we must notice how He "needed not that any should testify of man: for He knew "what was in man" (St. John ii. 25.). This is one of those lesser, but no less clear, proofs of Divine and miraculous power, which the careful reader will not fail to observe.

"Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee." "Whosoever "hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance" (xiii. 12.). "The paralytic comes with faith for *bodily* health, and he "receives a greater gift—health of the *soul*, and bodily health also" (*Wordsworth.*). It is sometimes imagined that the words "Thy sins be "forgiven thee" are of the nature of a wish or prayer; as though it were, 'May thy sins be forgiven thee.' This is an error. The words

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2. "*Son, be of good cheer,*" *&c.* With regard to the slight difference in this address between the several Evangelists, see *Note* on viii. 25.

A.D. 28. 3 And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This *man* blasphemeth.

c Ps. 139. 2. ch. 12. 25. Mark 12. 15. Luke 6. 8. & 9. 47. & 11. 17. 4 And Jesus c knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?

5 For whether is easier, to say, *Thy* sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk?

6 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith He to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house.

7 And he arose, and departed to his house.

8 But when the multitudes saw *it*, they marvelled,

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signify absolute forgiveness, and mean 'Thy sins *are* forgiven thee.' This is plain not only from the original language, but also from the whole history, the by-standers certainly so understanding them. May we not gather from this act of forgiveness that the paralytic, in coming to Christ, sought healing for the soul as well as healing for the body?

3. **"Blasphemeth."** Blasphemy, in Scriptural language, means anything spoken against God or His honour. Thus it would be blasphemy to claim for oneself a power belonging of right only to God. This was what the Scribes supposed our Lord to have done in claiming to forgive sin, not knowing that He was God.

5. **"Whether is easier," &c.** To heal the body is easier than to forgive sins. The skill of a human physician may sometimes effect the former very quickly; but it is only a Divine Physician who can cure the soul. We must however observe that our Lord does not ask which is easier to *do*, but which is easier to *say*. Now it is certainly easier to lay claim to power to forgive sin than to power to heal the body, because the claim in the one case could not be proved, in the other would be proved at once. An impostor might pretend to forgive sin without being found out. He could not pretend to heal the sick by a miracle without being found out. So what our Lord would say is this, 'You think I am claiming what I have no right to, and what 'it is easy to claim, because the result is invisible. Then hear Me utter 'harder words, and claim a power which shall be visible in its result. 'And, if I can do that which you can see, believe that I can do that 'which you cannot see.'

6. **"On earth."** Why does the Lord put in these words? Because He would imply that the power to forgive was manifestly His *in heaven*. It was only because of the laying aside, and emptying Himself of, His heavenly glory, that there could be any doubt whether He had *on earth* power to forgive sins. He shows us that in putting off His glory He did not put off His power, but that the Divine attributes were His even in His humiliation. How clearly does our Lord here lay claim to the Godhead. He in no way denies the truth implied in the words of the Scribes, "Who can forgive sins but God alone?" (See St. Mark and St. Luke.) He simply claims the power, and thus claims the source of the power, even oneness with God.

and glorified God, which had given such power unto men. A.D. 28.

9 ¶ And as Jesus passed forth from thence, He saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and He saith unto him, Follow Me. And he arose, and followed Him.

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8. "**Unto men.**" These words do not imply that the multitude supposed *others* to share in the wondrous powers they had witnessed. They saw that One who came among them as their Brother-Man possessed this wondrous power, and they glorified God for it. The "power" here spoken of may include the working of miracles of healing, but seems to point most directly to the forgiveness of sin. Observe how Christ pardons in His own power and authority, as the very Fountain of all forgiveness. The Church, in her Absolutions, acts simply as His herald, *declaring* to her penitent children the blessed message of *His* pardon. In the Absolution in the Communion Service, which is the most ancient form, the words are in the form of a prayer:—"Almighty "God, pardon and deliver you from all your sins." In that of the Daily Morning and Evening Prayer the words are in the form of a solemn message pronounced by the ambassador of Christ for the comfort of all penitent believers:—"He pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly "repent, and unfeignedly believe His holy Gospel." In the Absolution in the Service for the Visitation of the Sick, which is the least ancient of the three, there is a double form;—firstly, a prayer; "Our Lord "Jesus Christ . . . forgive thee thine offences": secondly that strong expression, which is so often made a stumblingblock; "I absolve thee": —an expression which might give less offence if regarded as having a special meaning in the language of the Church, "I absolve" being understood simply as 'I pronounce thy absolution,'—a sentence, of course, depending for its efficacy entirely on the state of the penitent's heart. This expression also, coming down to us from an age when Church discipline was in active use, implied the removal of all Church censures or excommunication, and the restoration to Communion with the faithful. Surely the prayer in the first part of this Absolution should prevent our interpreting the words of the second part as a claim to a power which he who uses them has just prayed Christ to exercise. The Church's teaching is as follows. None can forgive sin but God alone. But it is one of the highest privileges of His appointed messengers both to pray for, and to declare and pronounce, that forgiveness in behalf of true penitents, and for the sake of Jesus Christ. (See on St. John xx. 23.)

9—13. The Calling and Feast of St. Matthew.

St. Mark ii. 13—17. St. Luke v. 27—32.

9. "**Matthew.**" We can hardly doubt that this is the same person as the Levi of the parallel passages, though in his own Gospel he calls himself only by his new or Christian name, which means 'Gift of God,' and which he would doubtless love best.

"**The receipt of custom.**" That is, the place where he received or collected the "custom" or taxes,—probably an office. This being at

A.D. 28. 10 And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with Him and His disciples.

11 And when the Pharisees saw *it*, they said unto
[d] ch. 11. 19. Luke 15. 2. [e] Gal. 2. 15. His disciples, Why eateth your Master with [d] publicans and [e] sinners?

12 But when Jesus heard *that*, He said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.

[f] Mic. 6. 6, 7, 8. ch. 12. 7. 13 But go ye and learn what *that* meaneth, [f] **I will have mercy, and not sacrifice:** for I am not come to
[g] 1 Tim. 1. 15. call the righteous, [g] but sinners to repentance. Hos. 6. 6.

Capernaum, it is supposed that he collected the tax or duty laid upon goods brought in boats across the Sea of Galilee. The lesson we may learn from St. Matthew's call cannot be expressed more briefly or beautifully than in the Collect for St. Matthew's Day:—"O Almighty "God, who by Thy blessed Son didst call Matthew from the receipt "of custom to be an Apostle and Evangelist; Grant us grace to forsake "all covetous desires, and inordinate love of riches, and to follow the "same Thy Son Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and "the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end."

10. "Many publicans and sinners." How could St. Matthew invite such company to meet the Lord? Perhaps he could get no other, men of his trade being so much disliked that they would naturally hang together. But doubtless also he longed, himself being cured, to bring the Physician and the sick together. He knew enough of Jesus to be sure He would not despise his company. He knew enough of them to be anxious they should gain the healing he had gained. Observe the modesty with which St. Matthew speaks of what St. Luke calls "a great feast."

11. "The Pharisees saw it." Not, of course, by being present; but either by actually seeing the company going or returning, or simply by the publicity so large an entertainment would have. The conversation with the Pharisees was no doubt *after* the feast.

12. "They that be whole," &c. Our Lord did not mean that the Pharisees were really "whole." He was speaking in answer to their own thoughts with a mournful irony (See on St. Mark vii. 9.). His meaning would be, 'You Pharisees think yourselves whole, and look 'upon the publicans and sinners as sick; surely then the Physician 'is in His place with the latter.' What comfort there is for sinners in this verse. They are sick. What then? The Physician is for the sick. They are ready to die. What then? The Physician is all the more ready to come where He is all the more needed. But mark this one thing. It is not to those who are *only sick* that He comes so readily. Else He would have been as ready to help the Pharisee as the publican, for his sickness was as sore. It is to those who, being sick, also know and feel themselves to be so.

13. "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice." This is quoted from the prophet Hosea (vi. 6.), and by it our Lord would teach the Pharisees that God loves the inward spirit of mercy, which was just what

14 ¶ Then came to Him the disciples of John, saying, [h] Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but Thy disciples fast not? A.D. 28.

[h] Luke 18. 12.

15 And Jesus said unto them, Can [i] the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the Bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the Bridegroom shall be taken from them, and [k] then shall they fast.

[i] John 3. 29.

[k] Acts 13. 2, 3. & 14. 23. 1 Cor. 7. 5.

16 No man putteth a piece of [2] new cloth unto an old garment, for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse.

[2] Or, *raw*, or, *unwrought cloth.*

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they lacked when they so despised and shunned the publicans and sinners, better than the outward observance of the law, which was just what they so greatly prided themselves in.

"The righteous"—"sinners." That is, those who think themselves so.

14—17. Discourse upon Fasting.

St. Mark ii. 18—22. St. Luke v. 33—39.

14. "The disciples of John." Observe how St. Luke makes the question as to fasting to come from the Scribes and Pharisees. Here is a seeming difference. But we turn to St. Mark, and there we find that the question was asked by *both*.

"Thy disciples fast not." Whether this is to be taken as a literal fact, and implies that our Lord's disciples laid aside the practice of fasting entirely while engaged in their new labours, or whether it only implies that they did not conform to the various fasts which the Jewish traditions enjoined, does not appear. It is plain however that, if they did fast at all, it was in such a manner as their Master had taught (vi. 17, 18.), that is, not to be seen of men.

15. "The children of the bridechamber," &c. Observe how our Lord uses St. John the Baptist's own comparison in His answer to his disciples. St. John the Baptist had compared himself to the "friend of "the Bridegroom" rejoicing "greatly because of the Bridegroom's voice" (St. John iii. 29.). Such joy the disciples had, so long as Christ, the heavenly Bridegroom, was with them. Not only their new labours and constant occupation would be a reason for their not fasting; but also it was no time for fasting and mourning while they possessed the bliss of His presence. But the time was coming when that joy would be theirs no more, and then would be indeed a time of fasting and mourning.

16. "No man putteth," &c. The two short parables in this and the next verses teach the vanity of attempting to mix together the spiritual freedom of the Gospel with the old ceremonies of the Law. The "old "garment" is the Jewish system with its numberless outward observances, its meats and drinks, its holy-days and new-moons and sabbaths (Col. ii. 16.), its fastings and purifyings, and the like. St. Paul calls these "weak "and beggarly elements" (Gal. iv. 9.), and speaks in another place of the "weakness and unprofitableness thereof" (Hebr. vii. 18.). The "new

A.D. 28. 17 Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.

18 ¶ While He spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, and worshipped Him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay Thy hand upon her, and she shall live.

"cloth" is the Gospel, which it would be vain to try to fit into such a system. The garment of the Christian must be *all* new. "If any man "be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, "all things are become new" (2 Cor. v. 17.).

17. "Old bottles." Made of skin or leather, and, if not sound and new, unable to bear the fermentation of new wine. To engraft the living spirit of the Gospel upon the ceremonies of the Law was as fatal a mistake as putting new wine into old bottles. They cannot agree together. The old Law is broken and destroyed, and the new spirit of the Gospel is lost, in the attempt. This is the great subject of the Epistle to the Galatians (See especially iii. 1—5. iv. 9—11. v. 1—4.). Many by the old and new bottles understand *persons*,—the old, those brought up in, and clinging to, the ceremonial observances of the Law,—the new, those accepting the renewing grace and freedom of the Gospel. But perhaps it is better to understand by the bottles rather the *systems* themselves, or the *ordinances* of the old and the new covenants, than the *persons* of those under the old and the new systems and ordinances. Still what is said of the ordinances may be truly said of the persons also. For if the old ordinances and ceremonial observances of the Law cannot contain the free and living spirit of the Gospel, neither can those clinging to such ordinances (like the Galatians) receive and retain that spirit.

18—26. The Miracles of the Raising of Jairus' daughter, and the Healing of the woman with the issue of blood.

St. Mark v. 21—43. St. Luke viii. 40—56.

18. "A certain ruler." St. Mark and St. Luke both relate this and the accompanying miracle more fully. This "ruler" we learn from them was named Jairus, and was a ruler of the synagogue, probably at Capernaum.

"Worshipped." The other Gospels describe Jairus as falling down before our Lord; an act of homage which seems to show that he felt Jesus to be more than man (See on ii. 2.).

"Dead." St. Mark says "at the point of death," St. Luke "a dying." No doubt the child was to all appearance very near death when the father started in search of Christ, and he would conclude she must have died by the time he spoke. The meaning seems to be, 'My daughter, 'who lay at the point of death as I left her, must by this time be 'dead.'

"She shall live." Perhaps we may see here a faith in Christ's power

18. "*Even now dead.*" See *Note* on viii. 25.

19 And Jesus arose, and followed him, and *so did* His disciples. A.D. 28.

20 And, behold, a woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years; came behind *Him*, and touched the hem of His garment:

21 for she said within herself, If I may but touch His garment, I shall be whole.

22 But Jesus turned Him about, and when He saw her, He said, Daughter, be of good comfort; [l] thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour.

[l] Luke 7. 50. & 17. 19. & 18. 42.

23 And when Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw [m] the minstrels and the people making a noise,

[m] See 2 Chron. 35. 25.

24 He said unto them, [n] Give place: for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed Him to scorn.

[n] Acts 20. 10.

25 But when the people were put forth, He went in, and took her by the hand, and the maid arose.

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even stronger than that of the sisters of Bethany. They said, "Lord, "if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died" (St. John xi. 21 & 32.). Jairus went farther, and, believing his daughter dead, said, "Come, and lay Thy hand upon her, and she shall live."

23. "Minstrels." It was customary in the East for musicians to play mournful music in a house where one was dead; and also for the assembled people to express their grief much more noisily than we should think becoming.

24. "The maid is not dead, but sleepeth." There can be no doubt that our Lord is here using like language to that which He used of Lazarus, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go that I may awake "him out of sleep" (St. John xi. 11.). Death to the believer is always a sleep, as it was to St. Stephen in the midst of the stones which were crushing him (Acts vii. 60.); but it was yet more fitly so called by our Lord when He knew how speedy was to be the awakening.

"They laughed Him to scorn." This proves how thoroughly the people were convinced of her death. They at any rate are trustworthy witnesses to the reality of the miracle, "knowing that she was dead" (St. Luke).

25. "The maid arose." Farther particulars are found in the parallel passages. We would pause here, in the presence of this our Lord's first miracle of Resurrection, to note how He is Lord over death in all its stages. Here He calls back the spirit which has but a little while left its earthly tabernacle. The widow of Nain's son is restored to his mother as he is being carried out for burial, which in the Holy Land would probably be the evening of the day of death, or at latest the day after. Lazarus had been dead four days. If we add to these the rising

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20. "*Behold, a woman*" &c. This miracle is given so much more fully by St. Mark that it is better to reserve the discussion of it for his Gospel.

A.D. 28.

26 And [2] the fame hereof went abroad into all that land.

[2] Or, *this fame.*

27 ¶ And when Jesus departed thence, two blind men followed Him, crying, and saying, [o] *Thou* Son of David, have mercy on us.

[o] ch. 15. 22. & 20. 30, 31.

28 And when He was come into the house, the blind men came to Him: and Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto Him, Yea, Lord.

29 Then touched He their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you.

30 And their eyes were opened; and Jesus straitly charged them, saying, [p] See *that* no man know *it.*

[p] ch. 8. 4. & 12. 16. & 17. 9. Luke 5. 14.

31 [q] But they, when they were departed, spread abroad His fame in all that country.

[q] Mark 7. 36.

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of the bodies of the saints at the Crucifixion, which, though not at the express command of Christ, was surely by His power, we see death in all its stages bowing before its conqueror the Lord of Life. And in these instances, as in our Lord's own Resurrection, we have the pledge and earnest of the great resurrection at the last day, "in which all that are "in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth" (St. John v. 28, 29. See also on St. John xi. 44.).

27—34. The two blind men, and the dumb demoniac.

27. "Two blind men." Blindness is more common in the East than with us. Observe how frequently our Lord heals it. (For example see xii. 22. xx. 30. xxi. 14.) We must be careful to distinguish this miracle from that of the two blind men at Jericho (xx. 30—34.).

"Thou Son of David." In this title, which, we may observe, is used also by the two blind men at Jericho (xx. 30.), we see an evidence that Jesus was acknowledged by some at least as the Messiah, who was looked for in David's line.

28. "Believe ye" &c. Our Lord does not at once grant their request, but delays, as with the Syrophenician woman, that their faith may be made manifest.

29. "According to your faith." Here we have expressed the condition so constantly implied. Faith, where faith is possible, is the measure of our power to receive divine gifts. We see in the very next miracle (32, 33.) that faith was not demanded where it could not be. So that perhaps it would be truest to say that wilful unbelief is the fatal bar to spiritual blessing. Observe how in His own country Jesus "did not many mighty works . . . *because of their unbelief*" (xiii. 58.).

31. "Spread abroad His fame." No doubt this disobedience to our Lord's strict command arose, as in other like cases, from an earnest gratitude. Yet the highest and truest gratitude would surely have shown itself in loving obedience to the least wish of Him to whom it was felt.

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30. With regard to our Lord's strict command of silence see on viii. 4.

32 ¶ [r] As they went out, behold, they brought to Him a dumb man possessed with a devil. A.D. 28. r See ch. 12. 22.

33 And when the devil was cast out, the dumb spake: and the multitudes marvelled, saying, It was never so seen in Israel.

34 But the Pharisees said, [s] He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils. s ch. 12. 24. Mark 3. 22.

35 ¶ [t] And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, [u] teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. t Mark 6. 6. Luke 13. 22. u ch. 4. 23.

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32. "A dumb man." See how the great Physician heals "every "sickness and every disease among the people" (35.). In this chapter alone we have the paralytic, the dead, the woman with the issue of blood, the blind, the dumb, the possessed, all equally the objects of the Saviour's mercy.

We cannot read these miracles without remembering that they are, in deep truth, also parables. Bodily sufferings are both the fruit, and also the types, of spiritual evil. Not, of course, that each case of bodily suffering is to be traced to some particular sin. This our Lord teaches us is a very wrong view to take (See St. Luke xiii. 1—5.). But all bodily evils are the fruit of man's sin, and therefore speak aloud to us of that sin. Their very object is to show us how hateful sin is in God's sight. And God's dealings bear a likeness one to another, wherever we meet with them. It is at the very bottom of the teaching of parables that the world of nature (as we call it) has so many likenesses to the world of grace. And it is the same between body and soul. There is much that is strangely alike in them. Thus all the outward evils we read of in this chapter have their likeness in the spiritual world. There is the blindness of the soul that will not see the truth; the dumbness that utters no inward voice of prayer or praise; the wasting sickness of some long-indulged lust; the helpless paralysis of one who has given way to temptation till he finds himself powerless to resist any more; the deadness of a soul given over to him that hath "the "power of death" (Heb. ii. 14.). Let us thank God that, when these soul-sicknesses so abound, there is the Physician ever present, and ever ready to answer the cry for aid.

35—38. Second tour through Galilee.

35. "All the cities and villages." Briefly as this is told us, what wonders of word and of work are summed up in this verse! It is almost a repetition of the account of a like journey before (iv. 23.). Well does St. Peter describe our Lord's work, declaring "how God anointed Jesus "of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about "doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for "God was with Him" (Acts x. 38.).

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34. *"Through the prince of the devils."* See on xii. 24—30.

35. *"The Gospel of the kingdom."* See on iv. 23.

A.D. 28. 36 [x] But when He saw the multitudes, He was
[x] Mark 6. 34. moved with compassion on them, because they [2] fainted,
[2] Or, *were tired and lay down.* and were scattered abroad, [y] as sheep having no
[y] Num. 27. 17. 1 Kin. 22. 17. Ezek. 34. 5. Zech. 10. 2. shepherd.
37 Then saith He unto His disciples, [z] The harvest
[z] Luke 10. 2. John 4. 35. truly *is* plenteous, but the labourers *are* few;
38 [a] pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest,
[a] 2 Thess. 3. 1. that He will send forth labourers into His harvest.

CHAPTER X.

1 *Christ sendeth out His twelve apostles, enabling them with power to do miracles, 5 giveth them their charge, teacheth them, 16 comforteth them against persecutions: 40 and promiseth a blessing to those that receive them.*

AND when He had called unto *Him* His twelve
[3] Or, over. disciples, He gave them power [3] *against* unclean

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36. "They fainted." They were wearied out, probably with following Jesus that they might learn from Him. Perhaps it may have a wider meaning, and signify that the people were wearied out and ready to despair in their hopeless helpless search after truth and light and heaven. They were "as sheep having no shepherd," because those who should have taught and led them were "blind guides" (xxiii. 16.), and would not, or could not, help them.

37. "The harvest." The struggling yearning fainting multitude were like corn waiting for the reapers. Jesus looked on them and beheld them as a field "white already to harvest" (St. John iv. 35.). Yet He and His little band of followers were "few" to do the great work of gathering all these souls for God. Is it not always so? How "few" are we to win a world!

38. "Pray ye." This we do when we say "Thy kingdom come" (See on vi. 10.). But we should do more than this. For, as our Lord gave the great missionary command, when He said, "Go ye . . . and "teach all nations" (xxviii. 19.), so did He enforce special prayer for the same holy work when He uttered the words before us. We could not have more fitting prayers that God would "send forth labourers into "His harvest" than those which our Church has appointed to be used daily during the Ember weeks (that is, the weeks preceding the four Ordination Sundays,) and the third Collect for Good Friday.

CHAPTER X.

1—42. Commission to the twelve Apostles.

St. Mark iii. 13—19. vi. 7—13. xiii. 9—13. St. Luke vi. 12—16. ix. 1—6. xii. 1—12. xxi. 12—19.

Compare the sending forth of the Seventy, St. Luke x. 1—16.

1. "Called." This is certainly not the *first* calling or choice of the twelve Apostles, as we can see plainly in St. Mark's and St. Luke's Gospels. St. Mark describes an earlier choice and appointment of the Twelve in his third chapter, while he describes their sending forth, (which is what St. Matthew is describing in this place,) in his sixth. So also St. Luke describes the choice of the Twelve in his sixth chapter, but this sending of them forth in his ninth.

"His twelve disciples." Though chosen to the higher title and

spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease. A.D. 28.

2 Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, [a] who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James *the son* of Zebedee, and John his brother; [a] John 1. 42.

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holy office of "Apostles" (which they are called in the next verse), the Twelve are still "disciples," learners (as the word means) in the school of their heavenly Master. So must ever the greatest and the wisest be here below. Nay, the greater and the wiser they are, the more deeply will they feel their ignorance, and their need of a Divine Teacher. There is a very touching and instructive expression in one of the beautiful letters written by the aged Bishop Ignatius, when on his way as a prisoner to Rome, there to be martyred by wild beasts;—"Now," he writes, "I am beginning to be a disciple."

It is impossible not to be struck with the frequency of the number twelve in things of God's appointment. Our Lord Himself connects the number of the Apostles with that of the Tribes of Israel (xix. 28.); and observe the twelve foundations of the new Jerusalem inscribed with the names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb (Rev. xxi. 14.). Of course we must remember that one name has to be changed, Matthias succeeding to that throne from which Judas by transgression fell.

2. "Apostles." The word 'Apostle' means 'one sent forth,' and thus always implies the *Missionary* character of the first founders of the Church. It is probable that this fact, together with the sacredness of the title, led to its discontinuance when the Church became settled, and required resident rulers rather than Missionary founders.

We have in the New Testament four lists of the Apostles: one by St. Matthew, in this place; one by St. Mark (iii. 16—19.); and two by St. Luke, one in his Gospel (vi. 14—16.), and the other in the Acts of the Apostles (i. 13.). We may observe that in all these lists St. Peter stands first, and Judas Iscariot last (except in the last-named where he is not mentioned at all). Also it may be a help to the memory to notice that in all the lists we may divide the twelve names into three groups of four each, the same name standing at the head of each such group of four, however the other names may change places. Thus in all Simon Peter stands at the head of the first four, who are always the two pairs of brothers, Simon and Andrew, and James and John: in all Philip stands at the head of the second four, who are Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, and Matthew; and in all James the son of Alphæus (commonly called 'James the less') stands at the head of the third four, who are James and Jude, Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot.

"The first, Simon, who is called Peter." That St. Peter held the first place among the Apostles no one can fail to see. But it was only a first rank among equals, and in no way implies any sort of rule or authority over them. As this point bears on the claims of the Roman Church, it will be discussed when we come to our Lord's words, "Thou "art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church" (xvi. 18.). It is enough to mention here that the name "Peter" ("Cephas" in the Hebrew), given to Simon by our Lord at their first meeting (St. John i. 42.), signifies 'Rock' or 'Stone.'

A.D. 28. 3 Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James *the son* of Alphæus, and Lebbæus, whose surname was Thaddæus;

[b] Acts 1. 13. [c] John 13. 26. 4 [b] Simon the Canaanite, and Judas [c] Iscariot, who also betrayed Him.

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3. **"Bartholomew."** Supposed, with much reason, to be the same person as Nathanael. Three reasons may be given for this belief. First, Bartholomew is only a name of *parentage*, the 'Bar' at the beginning of Hebrew names signifying 'son of,' so that probably he would have another name. [Compare St. Peter's name of parentage 'Bar-jona,' or Son of Jona; and the name the Apostles gave to Joses, 'Barnabas,' or Son of Consolation.] Secondly, in the account of the calling of the first disciples by St. John (i. 40—51.) Nathanael is brought to Jesus by Philip, just as Simon Peter by his brother Andrew, while in three of the lists of the Apostles Philip and *Bartholomew* are coupled together. Nothing could be more natural, if Bartholomew be the same as Nathanael. Thirdly, Nathanael is mentioned by St. John (the same Evangelist who speaks of him under this name in his first chapter) as present with other Apostles when our Lord appeared at the Sea of Tiberias after His Resurrection (St. John xxi. 2.).

"Matthew the publican." Perhaps few things are more remarkable in studying the various writings of the New Testament than the singular humility of the inspired writers. They whom Christ exalted most love most to humble self. Most often self is kept carefully in the shade. Where obliged to be named, how humbly is it mentioned. Here St. Matthew adds to his name that which would be esteemed his shame and dishonour. Verily "he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (St. Luke xiv. 11.). Perhaps it is not by mere accident that the Evangelist here places his own name below that of St. Thomas, whereas St. Mark, and St. Luke in his Gospel, place it above.

"James the son of Alphæus." Called 'James the less' to distinguish him from the son of Zebedee. Alphæus is probably the same as Cleopas (See *Note* on St. John xix. 25.).

"Lebbæus." This Lebbæus or Thaddæus of St. Matthew and St. Mark is generally allowed to be the same person as "Judas the brother of James" of St. Luke. Thus he is brother to the last-named Apostle, and son also of Alphæus or Cleopas. He is the writer of the General Epistle of St. Jude. (See *Note* on xiii. 55.)

4. **"Simon the Canaanite."** The spelling of this latter word in our English translation is wrong. It should be 'Cananite.' Some imagine this to signify a native of Cana in Galilee, but it is more probable that it is taken from a Hebrew word meaning the same as the Greek word "Zelotes" used by St. Luke, and signifies a member of the sect of the Zealots. These persons were very wild and fanatical in their notions, thinking they had a call from heaven to punish sin, and taking the law into their own hands for that purpose. Their cruel outbreaks helped at last to bring down destruction on their country by rousing the anger of the Roman government. Note how the Pharisees feared that Christ's teaching would have this effect (St. John xi. 48.); and the Town-clerk of Ephesus feared they might be called to account for the uproar in the theatre (Acts xix. 40.). Of course it was before his conversion that Simon was "Zelotes" in the above sense: but as "Zelotes" might imply

5 These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, [d] Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into *any* city of [e] the Samaritans enter ye not: A.D. 28.

[d] ch. 4. 15.

[e] See 2 Kin. 17. 24. John 4. 9, 20.

a zeal for right, as well as for wrong, the name might have been kept in a new and Christian sense to distinguish this Apostle and mark his ardour and zeal for his new Master.

"**Iscariot.**" This word only signifies the native place of the traitor. It is literally 'a man of Kerioth.' Kerioth was a town close to the southern border of the Holy Land. (On our Lord's choosing of the traitor see on St. John vi. 70.)

5. "**Sent forth.**" As we learn from St. Mark, "by two and two;" and probably in the pairs as given in the foregoing list. The word translated "sent forth," both here and in verse 16, is that from which the word 'Apostle' is formed. It was this solemn *sending forth* which made the name '*Apostles*' so fitting for the chosen Twelve.

"**Commanded them, saying.**" The remainder of the chapter, containing our Lord's commission to His Apostles, naturally divides itself into three portions. In the first of these (5—15) our Lord gives directions for the present mission of the Apostles to the cities of Israel, His words referring to that special time and that special journey. In the second portion (16—23) our Lord looks forward to a future time and a wider work. His directions point to the great missionary work of His Church when He should in person be taken from her. They would principally apply to that work as carried on by the Apostles after the Ascension, and as described by St. Luke in the Acts of the Apostles. But they certainly may also be applied to *all* missionary work. In the third portion (24—end) the great Head of the Church widens the range of His view still farther, and speaks of the mission of that Church in the world in terms which, though touching most closely those who hold His special commission as ordained ministers, have their bearing upon all Christian people, whose plain duty it is to preach Christ and His kingdom by being the "salt of the earth" and the "light of the "world" (v. 13, 14.).

5. "*Commanded them, saying.*" It is not necessary to believe that the whole of this conversation was spoken at once or on one occasion. If we compare the parallel passages in St. Luke, it would seem as though part were spoken at the sending forth of the Apostles, and part at the sending forth of the seventy disciples. (See St. Luke xii. 11, 12, and 51—53, for the former, and x. 3—16, for the latter.) It is generally allowed that St. Matthew appears to delight in grouping together matters which bear upon each other, or have a common link of connection, without any purpose of presenting them in the order of their occurrence. Remarkable instances of this are seen in the grouping together of miracles in the eighth and ninth chapters, of parables in the thirteenth, and of pictures of the Judgment Day in the twenty-fifth. On the other hand St. Luke, as we may learn from the opening words of his Gospel, aims at a more historical arrangement, and undertakes to write the things he narrates "in "order." Thus upon the present chapter Bishop Ellicott writes: "When we re- "member that St. Matthew does not no- "tice the sending forth of the Seventy, "and further, when we compare the in- "structions delivered to them, as record- "ed by St. Luke with those which are "here recorded by St. Matthew as deli- "vered to the Twelve, it seems hard to "resist the conviction that, as the first "Evangelist was moved in the preceding "chapters to group miracles together, so "in the present case he is presenting in "a collateral form all our Lord's instruc- "tions on the subject of missionary duties "and labours generally."

A.D. 28. 6 [f]but go rather to the [g]lost sheep of the house of Israel.

[f] ch. 15. 24. Acts 13. 46.
[g] Isai. 53. 6. Jer. 50. 6, 17. Ezek. 34. 5, 6, 16. 1 Pet. 2. 25.

The first of these portions (5—15) again divides itself into four parts:—i, (5, 6) the persons to whom the Apostles were to go: ii, (7, 8) the work they were to do: iii, (9, 10) their means of support: iv, (11—15) their manner of proceeding.

"The Gentiles." Why not? Was not Christ come to be "a light "to lighten the Gentiles," as well as to be the glory of His people Israel? Yes, but not yet. Their time was not come. But this command, *not* to go to the Gentiles, was expressly withdrawn by our Lord before His Ascension, when He bade His Apostles go and "teach *all* "*nations*" (xxviii. 19.); and when He promised them power, in the gift of the Holy Ghost, to be witnesses unto Him "both in Jerusalem, and "in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the "earth" (Acts i. 8.). St. Paul too received exactly an opposite commission to that given now to the Apostles. He was to be the Apostle of the *Gentiles*, and to minister, chiefly at least, to them (See Gal. ii. 7, 8.).

"Samaritans." Although Samaria occupied the very centre of the Holy Land (See Map), its inhabitants were mainly of Gentile origin, being sprung from those heathen people whom Esarhaddon, king of Assyria, sent there to occupy the country, from which his grandfather Shalmaneser had carried the remnant of the ten tribes of the kingdom of Israel into captivity. For a short time these new settlers retained the worship of the false gods of their native land, but, God having punished them by sending lions among them, they asked for some of the Israelitish priests who were in captivity to be sent to teach them the worship of the true God. After this they for some time adopted a mixed worship, acknowledging the God of Israel, but retaining much of their ancient heathenism (See 2 Kings xvii. 24 to end). At a later period many Jews of the upper classes, discontented with their own laws and government, joined the Samaritans; Manasseh, son of the high priest, who, in violation of the Jewish law, had married a daughter of Sanballat governor of Samaria, being among them. Sanballat at this time built on mount Gerizim a rival temple to that at Jerusalem (See on St. John iv. 20.), and made his son-in-law Manasseh high priest. From this time the Samaritans gave up their idolatry, though retaining a very imperfect faith and worship (See on St. John iv. 22.). Samaria henceforth became a refuge for lawless and discontented Jews; and this, added to the difference of race, and the schismatic act of setting up a rival temple, caused the deadly enmity which existed between the Jews and Samaritans. The Jews "had no "dealings with the Samaritans" (St. John iv. 9.), and when they wished to say the bitterest thing they could of Christ, they said "Thou art "a Samaritan, and hast a devil" (See on St. John viii. 48.). When the Church, after the descent of the Holy Ghost, came forth before the world as a "Catholic" Church, that is, universal, free to all alike, Samaria, as the nearest neighbour, was the first to be invited within the fold (See Acts viii. 5—8.).

6. "The lost sheep of the house of Israel." It was God's will that His chosen people should have the *first* offer of the Gospel. This even the Apostle of the Gentiles himself carefully bore in mind, wherever

7 And as ye go, preach, saying, [h] The kingdom of heaven is at hand. A.D. 28.

8 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: [i] freely ye have received, freely give.

9 [k] [2] Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses,

10 nor scrip for *your* journey, neither two coats,

[h] ch. 3. 2. & 4. 17.
[i] Acts 8. 18, 20.
[k] 1 Sam. 9. 7. Luke 22. 35.
[2] Or, *Get.*

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he went, even in Gentile cities, making his appeal to the Jews before he turned to the Gentiles. We must not think that God (if we may speak it without irreverence) changed His purpose, when the Jews had rejected His offers of mercy, and then resolved to open the door of grace to the Gentiles. His purpose had always been "to gather together in "one all things in Christ" (Eph. i. 10.), and to make both Jews and Gentiles "one," breaking down the "middle wall of partition" between them (Eph. ii. 14.). But God had not "cast away His people, which "He foreknew" (Rom. xi. 2.), and to them the Saviour was sent, even though, when "He came unto His own, ... His own received Him not" (St. John i. 11.). (See on ii. 11.)

7. "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." This shows at once that the first portion of these directions belongs to the special missionary journey the Apostles were then about to undertake. The preaching is still only preparing the way of the Lord. The Apostles have still to sound the note of the forerunner, and declare the near approach of the kingdom of grace. So did Jesus Himself begin to preach (See iv. 17.).

8. "Freely give." An excellent comment on these words will be found in St. Peter's exhortation to the presbyters of the Church, "Feed "the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, "not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready "mind" (1 St. Peter v. 2.).

9. "Provide" &c. The command, both here and in St. Luke's Gospel (ix. 3.), not to "provide," or "take," a staff seems at variance with St. Mark's account (vi. 8.), in which we find the words "save "a staff only." The true explanation is probably that the Apostles were commanded not to provide, by purchase or otherwise, anything for their journey, although what they had already they might take with them. Thus St. Matthew and St. Luke give the general command, St. Mark naming, with his usual accuracy, an exception allowed. We could understand our Lord saying, 'Do not get for your journey money, 'coats, shoes, nor staves, or, if you have staves, go with those only.'

10. "Shoes." That is, probably, a second pair, as with the "two "coats." But possibly our Lord means that they should not wear "*shoes*" at all, but simply the plainer "sandals" (St. Mark vi. 9.), which were mere soles of leather bound on with thongs.

That these commands only referred to that particular time we can see by our Lord's own so different commands at a later time (St. Luke xxii. 35, 36.). So it would only show ignorance to take them as a rule for Christ's ministers now, except in the general sense of a command to avoid all worldly cares and anxieties, and to be content with what God provides.

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7. "*The kingdom of heaven.*" See on iii. 2.

A.D. 28. neither shoes, nor yet [2] staves: [1] for the workman is
2 Gr. *a staff.* worthy of his meat.
1 1 Cor. 9. 7, &c. 1 Tim. 5. 18. 11 And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence.

12 And when ye come into an house, salute it.

13 And if the house be worthy, let your peace
m Ps. 35. 13. come upon it: [m] but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.

14 And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear
n Neh. 5. 13. Acts 13. 51. & 18. 6. your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, [n] shake off the dust of your feet.

"The workman is worthy of his meat." This does not only mean that "they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel" (1 Cor. ix. 14.), and so bid the Apostles claim support from those to whom they brought their saving message. It means that they were to trust to *God* to provide for them. *God* hired them to labour in His vineyard. From *Him* they were to look for their wages. No doubt God did provide for them by opening the hearts of disciples in all cities to receive and support them. But the claim spoken of by our Lord is on God, not on man.

11. "Worthy." That is, to receive you and your good tidings; a "son of peace" (St. Luke x. 6.).

13. "Let your peace come upon it." We should rather expect to read, 'Your peace *shall* come upon it.' But our Lord's words show that the bestowal of peace was in some sense the very act of the human minister who spoke the words of blessing. The salutation of peace, or the parting blessing, spoken with earnest intention, and received with faith, is no mere form, but one of God's channels of grace.

Observe that the salutation will often be given to the unworthy. Even Apostles would mistake. How much more uninspired men now. But it is better to be over-ready to trust than over-ready to suspect; and, even if a mistake is made, the very blessing is not lost. Others may reject it; but it may return into the bosom of him who speaks it. Again the Lord says, "*Let* your peace return," not 'It shall return': because it would depend on how the utterer of the blessing behaved to the unworthy whether it were so or not. He that, when he is met by slight and opposition, is gentle and patient and loving, takes back the peace he would gladly have bestowed into his own bosom. He that is harsh and stern and angry loses it both for the other and for himself also.

14. "Shake off the dust of your feet." This would mean, 'We 'break off all fellowship with you. We believe you to be in such peril 'that we will not have the least thing in common with you. We take 'back the peace we would have left with you, and we leave you with 'your guilt. We have done our part, and are pure from your blood' (See Acts xx. 26.). We must not forget, in reading these words, how God had striven with His people from the first, preparing them by the law and the prophets, and finally by the preaching of John the Baptist, for the coming of Christ. So their refusal to listen was the crowning act of a long series of like refusals (Compare the awful passage, Prov. i.

15 Verily I say unto you, [o]It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city. A.D. 28.

[o] ch. 11. 22, 24.

16 ¶ Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: [p]be ye therefore wise as serpents, and [q 2]harmless as doves.

[p] Rom. 16. 19. Eph. 5. 15.
[q] 1 Cor. 14. 20. Phil. 2. 15.
[2] Or, *simple.*

17 But beware of men: for [r]they will deliver you up to the councils, and [s]they will scourge you in their synagogues;

[r] ch. 24. 9.
[s] Acts 5. 40.

18 and [t]ye shall be brought before governors and kings for My sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles.

[t] Acts 12. 1. & 24. 10. & 25. 7, 23. 2 Tim. 4. 16.

19 But when they deliver you up, take no thought

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24 to end.). May it not be that this verse and the next are a parallel to the fearful words in the latter half of St. Luke xii. 10., "Unto him "that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven"? Those words seem to have been a part of our Lord's instructions to His Apostles, though repeated on another occasion (See on xii. 31.).

16. Here begins the Second part of the discourse (See on 5.), in which our Lord takes a wider view, and plainly speaks of such trials as those which we read of in the Acts of the Apostles.

"Wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." To unite together this wisdom and this innocence is indeed a hard thing. Wisdom without harmlessness is an awful gift. It is the very character of Satan. But harmlessness without wisdom is weak and powerless for good. The Christian must seek to be both wise in his dealing with others, and also loving and gentle; but, in so seeking, let him remember that it is better to be wronged than to wrong, and that, if Satan, "the Old Serpent" (Rev. xii. 9.), is wise, God is *Love.*

17. **"Councils."** These were Jewish courts of law, before which we read that St. Peter and St. John were brought (See Acts iv. and v.). In the latter chapter we read also of the beating or scourging mentioned in the text.

18. **"Governors and kings."** As in the case of St. Paul, who was brought before Sergius Paulus, Gallio, Felix, Festus, and Herod Agrippa.

"For a testimony against them." The word "against" is not in the Greek, and it would be quite as correct to translate the passage, "for "a testimony *to* them." The word spoken by the Apostles was to be a witness of the truth to all, whether that truth were received or rejected. It was indeed a testimony *against* those who rejected it, and they were the most. But, whether they would hear, or whether they would forbear, they should know that there had been a prophet among them (Ezek. ii. 5.).

19. **"Take no thought."** That is, 'Be not over anxious'; the same expression as that used in the Sermon on the Mount (vi. 25.). How anxiously do men, when called upon to defend themselves in public, desire to speak the right thing and in the right way. This might have

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15. See on the fuller passage in the next Chapter (xi. 23, 24.).

A.D. 28. how or what ye shall speak: for [u] it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.

[u] Ex. 4. 12. Jer. 1. 7.

20 [x] For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.

[x] 2 Sam. 23. 2. Acts 4. 8. & 6. 10. 2 Tim. 4. 17.

21 [y] And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against *their* parents, and cause them to be put to death.

[y] ver. 35, 36. Mic. 7. 6.

22 And ye shall be hated of all *men* for My name's sake: [z] but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.

[z] Dan. 12. 12, 13. ch. 24. 13.

23 But [a] when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not [2] have gone over the cities of Israel, [b] till the Son of man be come.

[a] ch. 2. 13. & 4. 12. & 12. 15. Acts 8. 1. & 9. 25. & 14. 6.

[2] Or, *end*, or, *finish*.

[b] ch. 16. 28.

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been a snare to the Apostles, who were bidden to be "wise as serpents." Therefore they are told not to be anxious as to their words, inasmuch as they should receive the aid of the Holy Spirit in speaking. Surely these "holy men of old spake," not alone in the utterance of the lip, but still more in the record of the pen, "as they were moved by the "Holy Ghost."

22. "Hated of all men." "The friendship of the world is enmity "with God" (St. James iv. 4.). Therefore it is "blessed" (v. 11.) to be reviled and persecuted and hated by the world. But only if it be *for Christ's sake*. It is easy to bring down hatred and persecution by self-will and folly. Then the blessedness is gone.

"To the end." What "end" is this? Probably to each man the end of his own trial, whensoever that may be, the sentence being of the nature of a general saying, though of course here applied to the Apostles. It may however refer to that fearful destruction of Jerusalem which is used by our Lord as a type of the last day, and of which He speaks in the next verse, but much more fully in ch. xxiv. (See on xxiv. 13.)

23. "Flee ye into another." Not therefore abandoning the work, but, as the next words show, to carry it on with the greater zeal. The best illustration of the command here given is to be found in the history of St. Paul's first Missionary journey in Acts xiii. and xiv.

"Till the Son of man be come." The coming of Christ has more than one meaning in the New Testament. Besides the last coming to judge the world, the expression also means the coming to take vengeance upon the guilty nation of the Jews in the destruction of Jerusalem, an event the horrors of which have rarely, if ever, been equalled, and which was therefore a most fit type of the final destruction of the wicked at the last great day (See on xxiv. 21.). Our Lord urges speed upon His Apostles, inasmuch as they would not have time to visit all the cities of the land of Israel, to bear their witness to them, before that people should be overthrown, their land taken from them, and them-

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21. "*And the brother shall*" &c. See on 34—36.

23. "*Till the Son of Man be come.*" It is most important, in order to understand this expression correctly, to study carefully Chapter xxiv. throughout.

24 ¶ [c]The disciple is not above *his* master, nor the servant above his lord. A.D. 28

25 It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If [d]they have called the Master of the house [2]Beelzebub, how much more *shall they call* them of His household?

26 Fear them not therefore: [e]for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known.

27 What I tell you in darkness, *that* speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, *that* preach ye upon the housetops.

[c] Luke 6. 40. John 13. 16. & 15. 20.
[d] ch. 12. 24. Mark 3. 22. Luke 11. 15 John 8. 48, 52.
[2] Gr. *Beelzebul.*
[e] Mark 4. 22. Luke 8. 17.

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selves driven away as exiles into all lands (See on xvi. 28.). This event happened A.D. 70, about 40 years after these words were spoken.

24. With this verse begins the third portion of our Lord's address to the Apostles. In this portion He speaks more widely and generally of the Christian's position in the midst of an unbelieving world (See on 5.).

"The disciple is not above his master." This saying is of the nature of a proverb, and is used by our Lord elsewhere for different purposes (See St. Luke vi. 40, and St. John xiii. 16.). Here the meaning is plain, and is the same as that in St. John xv. 20. Christ's servants must not expect to be better treated than Christ Himself was, but must be satisfied if no worse treated. St. Paul counted it a great gain to know the "fellowship" of his Lord's "sufferings" and to be made "conformable "unto His death" (Phil. iii. 10.). And the Church, in the exhortation in the Service for the Visitation of the Sick, says, "There should be "no greater comfort to Christian persons than to be made like Christ "by suffering patiently adversities, troubles, and sicknesses." And again, "Our way to eternal joy is to suffer here with Christ; and our door to "enter into eternal life is gladly to die with Christ."

25. **"Beelzebub."** The name of an idol worshipped by the Philistines (See 2 Kings i. 2.); used by the Jews as a name for Satan. In ascribing our Lord's miracles to the power of Beelzebub (xii. 24.), the Jews in effect, though perhaps not in actual word, called Him by this name.

26. **"Fear them not."** The greater part of what follows flows from these words, and consists of reasons for not fearing man.

"There is nothing covered," &c. This again is one of those sayings frequently repeated by our Lord. Here the meaning seems to be this: The efforts of man cannot really hinder the spread of God's truth. Therefore fear not. The word, now as it were secret and hidden, shall be proclaimed aloud. Your work as heralds of the Gospel shall not fail. So be not discouraged. Speak boldly to all men the message I now speak to you in private. Another meaning the words may bear is this: Fear not; because all your secret sufferings and persecutions and labours shall at last be acknowledged openly in that day, when the Lord shall come, "who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, "and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall "every man have praise of God." (Compare on St. Mark iv. 22.).

A.D. 28.

28 [f] And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

29 Are not two sparrows sold for a [2] farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.

30 [g] But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

[f] Isa. 8. 12, 13. 1 Pet. 3. 14.

[2] *It is in value half penny farthing in the original, as being the tenth part of the Roman penny*: See on ch. 18. 28.

[g] 1 Sam. 14. 45. 2 Sam. 14. 11. Acts 27. 34.

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28. "Fear Him." Who is spoken of in these words? It is not easy to decide. Stier, a very able German Commentator, says, On no other words in all the Bible could the contest arise whether God or Satan be signified. He takes strongly the latter view. Much may be said on both sides, but probably it is best, as it is certainly most usual, to refer the words to God. In that case there is, no doubt, a slight change in the sense of the word "fear," which when applied to God cannot signify dread, but that better fear which is a fear of offending, and not a dread of the person feared. Still, if the whole passage be read thoughtfully, it seems more natural to take this view. It would be no encouragement to the Apostles to be told to fear the power of Satan. Nor does it seem a natural thing to say they must fear Satan, but must not fear Satan's instruments, namely evil men. It is a much more natural thing to say they must fear God, but not man, even if the sense of the word "fear" be slightly different as applied to God and man.

"Soul and body in hell." We have here a distinct witness to the general resurrection of the flesh. All shall rise again, though "some "to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (Dan. xii. 2.). It must be observed that the word here translated "hell" signifies the place of eternal torment, and is quite a different word from that used for the place of departed spirits, while separate from the body, although both are unfortunately translated by the same word "Hell" in English. When we read of "*destroying*" soul and body in hell, we must remember that to destroy does not mean to annihilate, or put an end to, for we read of being "punished with everlasting destruction from "the presence of the Lord" (2 Thess. i. 9.).

29. "Without your Father." This expression is explained by the fuller one in St. Luke (xii. 6.), "not one of them is forgotten before "God." Observe it is "*your* Father," not *their* Father, and so how much stronger the ground of confidence.

30. "The very hairs of your head." This is certainly true as a fact. For God, who knows all things perfectly, must know this as surely as He knows the number of the stars. But it does not seem as if the mere *knowledge* of God were meant in this place to encourage the Apostles. It seems rather as if the words were meant to imply that God *cares for* even the least things in His children. Thus the expression would be used in the same sort of sense as in the words "There "shall not an hair of your head perish" (St. Luke xxi. 18.), and "There "shall not an hair fall from the head of any of you" (Acts xxvii. 34.), where the sense is that not the least harm should happen to them.

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28. "*Hell.*" See *Note* on xi. 23, and *Commentary* on St. Luke xvi. 23.

31 Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value A.D. 28.
than many sparrows.

32 [h] Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, [i] him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven.

[h] Rom. 10. 9, 10.
[i] Rev. 3. 5.

33 [k] But whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in heaven.

[k] Mark 8. 38. Luke 9. 26. 2 Tim. 2. 12.

34 [l] Think not that I am come to send peace

[l] Luke 12. 49, 51, 52, 53.

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32. "Whosoever therefore shall confess Me." This confession of Christ before men is no mere confession of the lips, no mere crying "Lord, Lord," which is declared by Himself in the Sermon on the Mount (vii. 21.) to be worthless in God's sight. It is that confession which is made by a life of stedfast and consistent Christian conduct. The world will believe our actions rather than our words. What a wonderful encouragement must the gracious promise of this verse have been to the Apostles fearlessly to bear their Lord's message among men. What a wonderful encouragement to all who experience the truth of St. Paul's words, that "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall "suffer persecution" (2 Tim. iii. 12.).

33. "Whosoever shall deny Me." As the confession in the last verse is a consistent and abiding confession, so the denial in this is also a practical living denial of Christ. Human weakness may fall, and deny Christ, as St. Peter did, and yet repent, and receive at last Christ's gracious confession before His Father in heaven. Many, on the other hand, may profess to know and to serve Him, while "in works they "deny Him" (Titus i. 16.), and shall be denied by Him at the last.

34. "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth." How strange this sounds! Was not Christ the "Prince of Peace" (Isa. ix. 6.)? Did not the Angels sing "On earth peace" (St. Luke ii. 14.)? Did not the Lord Himself say, "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give unto "you" (St. John xiv. 27.)? Was not the very salutation the Apostles were to utter when they entered any house, "Peace be to this house" (St. Luke x. 5.)? How then can Christ say that He came *not* to send peace? There are two main answers to this question. First, we must distinguish between different sorts of peace. There is the inward peace of the spirit, that peace which the Apostle speaks of when he writes, "The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your "hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil. iv. 7.). And there is the outward peace of friendly concord and unity. The former peace Christ bestows even where the latter is, at the very same time, and by the very same means, marred and broken. When the Apostles spoke "Peace be to this house," they often came to bring outward division and strife among its members. The peace came to those who were 'sons of peace,' and they were kept peaceful even in the midst of strife, "troubled on every side, yet not distressed" (2 Cor. iv. 8.). How clearly does our Lord show that this is so, when He says, "These things I have "spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace. In the world ye "shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the "world" (St. John xvi. 33.). Secondly, we are not to suppose that the

A.D. 28. on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.

m Micah 7. 6. 35 For I am come to set a man at variance [m] against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

n Ps. 41. 9. & 55. 13. Micah 7. 6. John 13. 18. 36 And [n] a man's foes *shall be* they of his own household.

o Luke 14. 26. 37 [o] He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.

p ch. 16. 24. Mark 8. 34. Luke 9. 23. & 14. 27. 38 [p] And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after Me, is not worthy of Me.

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strife our Lord speaks of was to be a *lasting* strife. The best and surest peace is often only to be reached through strife. So that we need not limit the "peace on earth," which the Angels sang of, to *inward* peace. Assuredly the fruit of Christianity in the world is peace, and not strife, however much its first effect may be the sundering of the bonds of family union.

"A sword." Not in the hand of the Christian, but in the hand of his persecutors.

35. "To set a man at variance." This is made plain by comparing it with verses 21 and 36, from which we see that, although variance was to be, yet that variance would be stirred up, not by the Christian convert, but by the enemies to the cross of Christ.

37. "He that loveth father or mother more than Me." If this verse stood alone, we should not be at a loss to understand it. But taken in close connection with what goes before, it receives a more special and definite meaning; as though our Lord said, 'The Christian 'shall find those nearest and dearest to him ranged against him, because 'ranged against Me. He must make his choice between them and Me. 'If he love them best, so as to refuse to part with them for My sake, 'he is not worthy of Me,—not worthy to follow Me, and to be My 'disciple.' How blest were they who, whatever their outward trials and persecutions, were counted *worthy of Christ!* Well might He say to "such, "Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in "heaven" (v. 12.). It is well to observe that, although our Lord's words in St. Luke (xiv. 26.), "If any man come to Me, and *hate* not "his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and "sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple," sound more severe than those before us, the meaning is probably the same, and the one place is to be explained by the other.

38. "His cross." We are so familiar with the thought of the cross as bound up with the very work of Redemption that perhaps it does not always strike us how strange these words must have sounded when they were uttered. The punishment of crucifixion was a Roman, not a Jewish, punishment, and, although no doubt sometimes witnessed at that time at Jerusalem, it is hardly likely that the carrying of the cross had become a common expression for bearing what is hard and painful. Thus these

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34. "*A sword.*" See on St. Luke xxii. 36.

39 [q] He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for My sake shall find it. A.D. 28.

40 [r] He that receiveth you receiveth Me, and he that receiveth Me receiveth Him that sent Me.

41 [s] He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward.

42 [t] And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold *water* only in the name

q ch. 16. 25. Luke 17. 33. John 12. 25.
r ch. 18. 5. Luke 9. 48. John 12. 44. & 13. 20. Gal. 4. 14.
s 1 Kin. 17. 10. & 18. 4. 2 Kin. 4. 8.
t ch. 18. 5, 6. & 25. 40. Mark 9. 41. Heb. 6. 10.

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words are a prophecy, "signifying what death He should die" (St. John xii. 33.), as well as a saying, teaching the necessity of self-denial and self-sacrifice for Christ's sake.

39. "He that findeth his life." The words translated "findeth" and "loseth" in this verse are literally 'hath found' and 'hath lost.' The sense is, 'He that has taken good care of his life here below, refusing 'to peril it for My sake, that man shall lose what is only worthy to be 'called "life," namely, life eternal: while he that has given up his life 'here below, whether in will or in deed, for My sake, that man shall find 'his true "life"'. This saying is true, not only literally, of such as actually either suffer, or refuse to suffer, for Christ; but also in a more general sense, of such as either choose to have their portion in this life, or "count all things but loss" that they may "win Christ" (Phil. iii. 8.). In this latter sense the best commentary on this saying is in the two parables of the Rich Fool, and Dives and Lazarus.

40. "He that receiveth you receiveth Me." In the account of the Day of Judgment given in chapter xxv. we learn that we are to see Christ in His poor (xxv. 35—45.); here we learn that we are to see Him in His ministers. But in both cases it is not the persons themselves, but that which they bear about them, which makes them to represent Christ. In the poor it is their poverty; in the ministers of Christ it is their message and commission.

41. "In the name of a prophet." That is, because he is a prophet. Again observe it is not the man, but the office, which is to be regarded. The man may be unworthy of his holy office, but he that receives him for the sake of his office (and so for the sake of Him whose office he fills) shall not lose his reward. We do not doubt that those who received Judas Iscariot, because he was Christ's Apostle, received their reward in blessings from Him who sent the messenger.

"A prophet's reward." That is, such a reward as the faithful prophet himself will reap. Thus even those who cannot go forth as Christ's messengers in the world may hope to share a like reward with them. For the faithful messenger and the faithful receiver of the message,—the faithful preacher and the faithful hearer,—shall rejoice together. The crown which the aged Apostle of the Gentiles knew, before he died, his Lord had laid up for him, he also knew was not for himself alone, but for "all them also that love His appearing" (2 Tim. iv. 8.).

42. "These little ones." Probably little children, of whom some might have been present. Some however understand the expression as meaning less advanced or more ignorant disciples. Observe the three degrees—"a prophet," "a righteous man," and "one of these little ones."

A.D. 28. of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.

CHAPTER XI.

2 John sendeth His disciples to Christ. 7 Christ's testimony concerning John. 18 The opinion of the people, both concerning John and Christ. 20 Christ upbraideth the unthankfulness and unrepentance of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum: 25 and praising His Father's wisdom in revealing the gospel to the simple, 28 He calleth to Him all such as feel the burden of their sins.

AND it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding His twelve disciples, He departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities.

[a] ch. 14. 3. 2 Now when John had heard [a] in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples,

[b] Gen. 49. 10. Num. 24. 17. Dan. 9. 24. John 6. 14. 3 and said unto Him, Art Thou [b] He that should come, or do we look for another?

4 Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see:

Jesus brings the blessing lower and lower, and so by each step more within the reach of all.

CHAPTER XI.

1. This verse would have better stood at the end of the last chapter, as there is a break in the sense after it, but not before it (See on St. Mark iii. 19, *Note*, and ix. 1.).

2—6. St. John the Baptist's Question.

3. "Art Thou He that should come." It has been the subject of much argument whether St. John the Baptist asked this question to satisfy himself or to satisfy his disciples. The plain and natural sense of the passage is, no doubt, in favour of the former view: and it is very certain that the holiest men are often tried with painful, even if passing, doubts. The writers of the ancient Church for the most part take the view that St. John desired to satisfy his disciples' doubts, and not his own. Modern writers lean more to the view that St. John was himself somewhat shaken in his faith, or at least desired a declaration from our Lord's own lips for his own comfort. It would be very natural that the sufferings of St. John at this time in his prison should cloud his mind with fear and despondency, and even make him doubt for the moment whether One who could leave him thus to suffer could be indeed the Christ. There is surely wonderful comfort for those troubled with unwilling doubts in the thought that even one so holy and pure as St. John the Baptist was not exempt from this sore trial. This view would also give greater point to our Lord's discourse about St. John, when his two disciples had departed (7—19.), for it is plain that those who heard the question he had sent to ask might very well have doubted of his constancy or powers of endurance, so that our Lord defends him against any such suspicions.

4. "Go and shew John again those things," &c. This answer certainly appears to be made for the sake of St. John, and not of his messengers. If we may so argue without presumption, would not Jesus

A. D. 28.

5 [c]The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and [d]the poor have the gospel preached to them.

6 And blessed is *he*, whosoever shall not [e]be offended in Me.

7 ¶ And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? [f]A reed shaken with the wind?

8 But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? behold, they that wear soft *clothing* are in kings' houses.

[c] Isai. 29. 18. & 35. 4, 5, 6. & 42. 7. John 2. 23, & 3. 2. & 5. 36. & 10. 25, 38. & 14. 11.
[d] Ps. 22. 26. Isai. 61. 1. Luke 4. 18. James 2. 5.
[e] Is. 8. 14, 15. ch. 13. 57. & 24. 10. & 26. 31. Rom. 9. 37, 33. 1 Cor. 1. 23. & 2. 14. Gal. 5. 11. 1 Pet. 2. 8.
[f] Eph. 4. 14.

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have spoken very differently had He wished to satisfy only the doubts of the messengers? Would He not have answered in some such words as these, 'Ye have heard your master's witness, and he bare witness 'unto the truth. Wherefore will ye not believe him? But I have 'greater witness than that of John, even My works. By them shall 'your weak faith be confirmed. Go and tell John what ye have seen 'and heard, and *he* will then be able to satisfy all your doubts.' But He gives no hint of a desire to satisfy the messengers, while He deals most graciously and tenderly with the trouble of His friend, saying as it were to his messengers, 'Only tell John what you have 'seen and heard, and he will be able to answer his own questions. 'He will know then that he has not borne an untrue witness, but that 'I am He of whom the prophets spake.'

5. **"The poor," &c.** Mark this note of the Church of Christ. Where this is not, let the Church beware, for she is faithless to her Lord.

6. **"Blessed is he, whosoever," &c.** Possibly this is meant for a gentle rebuke of the Baptist's fears and doubts. He may not only have marvelled at no relief being sent to himself in his troubles, but have also conceived (as the Apostles themselves did) some vain fancies concerning Christ, looking for some speedy triumph of divine power, some great earthly manifestation of Christ's kingdom.

7—19. Discourse concerning St. John the Baptist.

7. **"As they departed."** Our Lord may have spoken what follows to the people to correct any false opinion of John the Baptist which his question might have given rise to.

"A reed." There would be abundance of reeds or rushes by the banks of the river in the wilderness of the Jordan, where John preached and baptized. The question means, 'Did you go out merely to see 'a weak and fickle man, a waverer, whose faith is blown about like 'a rush in the wind?'

8. **"A man clothed in soft raiment?"** 'If it was no mere waverer 'that drew you out, was it some man tenderly reared and delicately 'clothed, too luxurious to bear roughness and hardship?' The hearers would well recollect how different had been his appearance and his life. Roughly clothed (iii. 4.), ill housed, poorly fed, the man they went out to see was not one to turn coward in the day of distress, and to lose his trust in God when called to suffer.

A.D. 28.

9 But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, [g] and more than a prophet.

10 For this is *he*, of whom it is written, [h] **Behold, I send My messenger before Thy face, which shall prepare Thy way before Thee.** Mal. 3. 1.

11 Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

12 [i] And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven [2] suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.

[g] ch. 14. 5. & 21. 26. Luke 1. 76. & 7. 26.

[h] Mark 1. 2. Luke 1. 76. & 7. 27.

[i] Luke 16. 16.

[2] Or, *is gotten by force, and they that thrust men.*

9. "A prophet." Now the Lord rises to the people's thoughts, for "they counted him as a prophet" (xiv. 5.). But this is not enough. He has led them up to this, bringing out their own recollections of him whom they once listened to so gladly. But they must rise higher. For he is "more than a prophet." What is "more than a prophet"? The "Messenger": the Forerunner: the link between the old and the new: himself the subject of prophecy.

11. "There hath not risen a greater." Not a greater, that is, *in position and in privilege*. That this is the meaning the words "more "than a prophet" above, as well as the rest of the verse, show. In some things Abraham, Moses, Elijah, and Isaiah, were greater than John the Baptist; but no one of them was chosen to be the immediate Herald of the Saviour. Here was John's greatness. He was the "friend of the "Bridegroom" (St. John iii. 29.).

"He that is least in the kingdom of heaven." This cannot be understood if we forget that the "kingdom of heaven" is used by our Lord constantly to mean His heavenly kingdom set up *here on earth*, that is, the Church (See on iii. 2). Therefore what our Lord says is, that the least member of His Church is greater than John the Baptist. But what is "least"? Not 'least in holiness.' The "least" must be explained by the same rule as the "greater" above. Thus it means 'least in position and 'in privilege.' Such would be little children, and the uninstructed. But how are such greater,—greater, that is, again *in position and privilege*,—than John the Baptist? Because they are very subjects of that Kingdom, which he proclaimed to be "at hand." They are born anew into God's own family. They have the gift of the Spirit which descended upon the Church at Pentecost. John the Baptist was the "Friend of the Bride-"groom": the Church is the Bride. He was the Forerunner: Christians are the Members, of Christ. Again in respect of *knowledge* the least member of Christ's Church is more blest than John the Baptist. Dying before his Saviour, he knew less of the love and wonders of Redemption than any little child may know now.

12. "From the days of John the Baptist." That is, from the days of his first preaching and heralding the coming of the kingdom of heaven.

"Suffereth violence," &c. This is a difficult and much disputed

12. "*Suffereth violence.*" The Greek word here may mean either "*suffereth* violence," or '*useth* violence,' that is, either is treated forcibly and violently by others, or itself displays force, and presents itself with startling power before the world.

13 [k] For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. A.D. 28.

14 And if ye will receive *it*, this is [l] Elias, which was for to come.

[k] Mal. 4. 6.

[l] Mal. 4. 5. ch. 17. 12. Luke 1. 17.

passage. It cannot be dealt with unless we keep before us the parallel passage in St. Luke xvi. 16. "The law and the prophets were until "John, since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man "presseth into it." It must also be observed that in this latter passage the words translated "presseth into it," may be equally translated 'useth 'violence towards it.' The main question then is this, whether the *violence* spoken of in these places is to be understood in a good or a bad sense. If in a bad sense, the meaning would be this: 'the Kingdom of heaven is 'violently treated, and violent men seize upon it to destroy it.' But this meaning does not fit the general bearing of the whole discourse so well as that which takes the violence in a good sense. St. John the Baptist's question, "Art Thou He that should come, or do we look for another?" (3), gives the key to the whole discourse. Our Lord's object is to show that He *is* the expected Messiah, that law and prophet have done their work, and the new Kingdom *is* already established upon earth. It is as if he said, 'Do you want a proof that the time is come, and that I am He, 'when you see My kingdom so openly proclaimed, and men pressing into 'it with so much eager force and violence?' In the "violent" our Lord probably refers to the multitudes who thronged Him so constantly, and would have taken Him and made Him a king. There is a third sense which may be given to the passage, and which thoroughly accords with our Lord's object in His discourse, though perhaps that already given is the simplest and clearest. This third interpretation embraces both the other two, taking the *violence* in a perfectly general sense. It may be unfolded thus:—'The kingdom of heaven is no secret and hidden thing; 'it is a power which comes before the world with force and violence, 'setting men at variance with one another, bringing not peace but a 'sword, and violent persons seize on it, some to win its blessings, some 'to hurt and destroy it. It is made a subject of strife and violence and 'contention. It stirs men's minds violently, some with love, and some 'with hatred. Thus is its presence manifested.'

13. "All the prophets and the law prophesied until John." That is, all that went before John the Baptist was a preparation, and looked forward to something beyond. When this course of prophecy ended, it was time to expect the fulfilment. When types and shadows passed away, it was time for the substance to appear. Thus is Christ still answering the question, "Art Thou He that should come?" (3.)

14. "This is Elias." Prophesied of in Malachi iv. 5. This passage must be compared with xvii. 11, 12. and St. John i. 21. In the latter place, where St. John the Baptist denies that he is Elias, we may understand him to mean that he is not actually Elijah himself restored to earth, in which sense the Jews probably asked the question "Art thou "Elias?" He could not be ignorant of the truer application of the prophecy to himself, as revealed by the angel to his father Zacharias (St. Luke i. 17.). That prophecy was fulfilled, in that he came "in the "*spirit and power* of Elias." As Elijah was the severe rebuker of sin, in both king and people, in his generation, so was St. John the Baptist.

A.D. 28.

15 [m] He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

16 But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows,

17 and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented.

[m] ch. 13. 9. Luke 8. 8. Rev. 2. 7. 11, 17. 29. & 3. 6, 13, 22.

Both too were stern self-denying men (See on iii. 4.): The expression "if ye will receive it" appears to mean, 'if ye will understand it aright, 'not in the letter, as some do, but in its true spiritual application to these 'present times.' (See on xvii. 11, 12.) Many think this prophecy of Malachi, like many others, has a double fulfilment, being only partially fulfilled in St. John the Baptist, and pointing to another fore-runner, who shall come to prepare the world for the second coming of the Lord.

15. "**He that hath ears**" &c. These words seem always to imply that there is something more to be gathered by the willing and attentive listener than appears on the surface. And so it is here. For what would such a listener gather from our Lord's discourse? Surely a very clear answer to the question "Art Thou He that should come?" What could be plainer? The types and prophecies led up to those days. The kingdom was revealed in power. The messenger had come; and that messenger was the Elias who was to go before the Lord. There the Saviour stops. He draws no conclusion. He simply says, "He that "hath ears to hear, let him hear." And they that hear aright must needs make answer, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

16. It should be observed here that St. Luke inserts two verses (vii. 29, 30.) in this place, showing the effect of our Lord's words. The "people" and the "publicans," who had been baptized by St. John the Baptist, received them gladly. The "Pharisees and lawyers," who rejected the Baptist, of course also rejected Christ's testimony concerning him.

"**Like unto children.**" Strictly speaking the Jews were not like the children who called to their fellows, but like those others, the perverse children who would not be pleased with either sort of music. Possibly the comparison is drawn from children playing at a wedding and a funeral, and their companions refusing to join in either.

17. "**Piped**"—"**mourned.**" In these words our Lord sets forth the different ways in which He and St. John the Baptist presented themselves to the perverse and obstinate Jews. The piping is the gracious invitation to joy and peace; the mourning the stern rebuke and call to repentance.

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16. "*It is like unto.*" That is, It may be illustrated by. It is not uncommon to use the word "like" in this looser sense, as applying to the *whole* of what follows, rather than to the next words only. Thus our Lord says, "The king-"dom of heaven is likened unto a cer-"tain king" (xviii. 23.), where it is not the king, but the whole story, which pictures the kingdom of heaven. (See also xiii. 31, 44, 45. xx. 1. & xxii. 2.) It seems very harsh to understand the words (as some do) more literally, and to suppose our Lord to compare the *Jews* to the "children" first mentioned, and Himself and St. John the Baptist to their "fellows"; thus representing the Jews as inviting first the Baptist and then Himself to conform to their ways. It seems far more natural to make the invitation come from the two great Teachers, the Jews being the perverse children who would not listen to it.

18 For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil. A.D. 28.

19 The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a wine-bibber, [n] a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children. [n] ch. 9. 10.

20 ¶ Then began He to upbraid the cities wherein most of His mighty works were done, because they repented not:

21 Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were

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18. "Neither eating nor drinking." That is, most self-denying and abstemious, refusing all social pleasure, and all indulgence of the appetite. (See St. Luke i. 15.) Is it not true that even to this day the world judges hardly one who is stricter and more self-denying than others?

19. "Eating and drinking." That is, freely joining with others in their innocent social enjoyments, as at the marriage in Cana, or when invited to a feast, whether by a Pharisee (See St. Luke vii. 36. and xi. 37.), or by a Publican (See St. Luke v. 29.). It is terrible to read what gross and wicked charges the malice of His enemies could bring against the pure and spotless One. In one part of their charge they were right, though they meant it not. He was indeed the "Friend of publicans and "sinners." Could they but have felt and acknowledged *themselves sinners*, they would have found Him *their* Friend also.

"But wisdom is justified of her children." What is this "wisdom"? Doubtless the wisdom of God, who in calling men to salvation has been pleased to use both the sternness of the Baptist and the gentleness of Christ. That divine wisdom is "justified," that is, proved to be wisdom, shown to be right and good, by "her children," by those who have accepted her teaching and her messages, who have been awed by the terrors, and melted by the love, of God. All then had not been like the perverse children. Some had listened and obeyed.

20—24. The woe of privilege abused.

20. "Most of His mighty works." The miracles wrought in Chorazin and Bethsaida are not recorded. (See St. John xxi. 25.)

"They repented not." We read that our Lord's first preaching, like that of His fore-runner, was "Repent" (See iv. 17.).

21. "Chorazin."—"Bethsaida." Both small towns or villages near Capernaum, on the western side of the Sea of Galilee. The latter was the birthplace of St. Andrew, St Peter, and St. Philip.

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19. "*Justified.*" We must not take this word in its special and peculiar sense, as used by St. Paul, and generally in modern times, to signify pardoned and accepted by God. That sense would give no meaning to this passage. It is here used simply for proved or shown to be just.

21. "*Bethsaida.*" This Bethsaida must be distinguished from the other village of the same name on the Eastern side of the Lake, near to which the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand was performed (St. Luke ix. 10.). The meaning of the name—Fishing-village—may account for its being thus given to two places in the same neighbourhood.

A.D. 28. done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon,
o Jonah 3. 7, 8. they would have repented long ago °in sackcloth and ashes.

p ver. 24. ch. 10. 15. 22 But I say unto you, PIt shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you.

q See Isai. 14. 13. Lam. 2. 1. 23 And thou, Capernaum, qwhich art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.

"Tyre and Sidon." These two cities, formerly great and powerful and noted for their rich merchandize, stood on the sea-shore north of Galilee, and just beyond the borders of the Holy Land. They had been destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar and by Alexander the Great in accordance with prophecy (See Isai. xxiii. Ezek. xxvi, xxvii, xxviii.). In our Lord's time they were places of no great account, though they had been partly rebuilt. (See the mention of these places in Acts xii. 20. xxi. 3—7. xxvii. 3.)

22. "More tolerable." That is, more bearable. Those who never have received privileges will fare better in the day of judgment than those who have received them and abused them.

23. "Which art exalted unto heaven." Capernaum was indeed lifted up very near to heaven by the presence of Him who came down from heaven. It was highly favoured in seeing and hearing what "many "prophets and righteous men" had desired in vain to see and hear (xiii. 17.). To some it has seemed inconsistent with our Lord's humility to speak of the effect of His presence in such terms; and such persons understand the exaltation as referring to temporal prosperity only; but surely there can be no place for the thought of boastfulness in the words of Him who was perfect Truth.

"Hell." Not 'hell-fire'—Gehenna—but the 'place of the dead'—Hades (See on St. Luke xvi. 23.). Thus the expression is not so strong as appears in the English. It simply describes the utter casting down of one highly exalted. The overthrow of Babylon and of Egypt is spoken of in the same way by the prophets (See Isai. xiv. 9. Ezek. xxxii. 21.).

"Sodom." Which of us could have guessed the truth here told us by Him who knows all things? How little then can we judge of the *comparative* guilt of either nations or persons. And how charitable should be our judgments, when we are so little able to weigh all the circumstances which help to make sin greater or less in God's sight. On the other hand, how great must be our self-condemnation, when we think of our own privileges and the use we make of them. Can we tell that London will fare better in the day of judgment than Sodom or Capernaum? Are we sure that we ourselves are better in God's sight

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23. "*Capernaum.*" See on iv. 13.
"*Which art exalted.*" There is another reading here which makes this sentence a question, translating it, 'Shalt 'thou be exalted unto heaven?' the next words being the answer, as though it were, 'No; thou shalt be brought down 'to hell.'

24 But I say unto you, [r]That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee. A.D. 28. [r] ch. 10. 15.

25 ¶ At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because [s]Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, [t]and hast revealed them unto babes. [s] See Ps. 8. 2. 1 Cor. 1. 19, 27. & 2. 8. 2 Cor. 3. 14. [t] ch. 16. 17.

26 Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in Thy sight.

27 [u]All things are delivered unto Me of My [u] ch. 28. 18. John 3. 35. & 13. 3. & 17. 2. 1 Cor. 15. 27.

than some miserable wretch dying on the scaffold for his crimes? The guilt will be measured by the privileges. "Unto whomsoever much "is given, of him shall be much required" (St. Luke xii. 48.).

25—27. God's truth revealed to the humble.

St. Luke x. 21, 22.

25. "At that time." If we compare this passage with St. Luke, we shall find that the return of the seventy disciples after their first mission took place between the denouncing of the woe upon the impenitent cities and the words which follow in this place. This will give to those words a yet fuller meaning, without at all breaking their connection with the foregoing discourse. It would be quite natural that our Lord, after lamenting the impenitence of the cities where He had performed so many miracles, should turn with thankfulness to the thought of those meek and humble ones who had accepted His teaching. But still more natural would be this thankfulness, coupled as it was with joy of the Spirit (See St. Luke.), if meanwhile those whom He had sent forth in His name had returned with a good report of their success.

"Answered." That is, to His own previous words of woe. This '*answer*', addressed as it is to God the Father, is singularly solemn and weighty. It was the will of the Father, accepted with a public expression of thanksgiving by the Son, that the truths of God should not be discerned by the "wise and prudent" in their own eyes (such as were the Scribes and Pharisees among the Jews), but should be made known "unto babes," that is, to the meek and humble and teachable (such as were Matthew the publican and Mary Magdalene). (See 1 Cor. ii. 14.)

27. "All things are delivered unto Me of My Father." So St. John the Baptist had declared, when he said, "The Father loveth the Son, "and hath given all things into His hand" (St. John iii. 35.). So too St. Paul says, "It pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness "dwell" (Col. 1. 19.). The "things" our Lord is speaking of in this place as "delivered" to Him, are those truths which He came to reveal, and which were being revealed "unto babes" (See on St. John xii. 49, 50.).

25. "*At that time.*" It should be noted that some of the ablest commentators take a different view from that given above, and believe the passage in St. Luke to be an account of a different conversation of our Lord, who probably frequently repeated the same sayings on different occasions.

A.D. 28. Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the
x John 1. 18. & 6. 46. & 10. 15. Father; x neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and *he* to whomsoever the Son will reveal *Him*.

y John 13. 15. Phil. 2. 5. 1 Pet. 2. 21. 1 John 2. 6. 28 ¶ Come unto Me, all *ye* that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.
29 Take My yoke upon you, y and learn of Me;

"No man knoweth the Son." The "babes," that is, the meek and humble and teachable, learn many things concerning Christ, but not even *they* know all the wonders of His mysterious nature and of His boundless love. These only the Father knoweth, though He revealeth them in part "unto babes." So too the Father, "dwelling in the light "which no man can approach unto" (1 Tim. vi. 16.), is known, in His true Divine nature and attributes, only to the Son. But He too is revealed by the Son to whomsoever He will, in part, and so far as they are capable of receiving. We must not imagine that our Lord means to exclude the Holy Spirit from the participation of this heavenly knowledge; for "the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things "of God" (1 Cor. ii. 10.); and certainly the "Spirit of truth," who leads men "into all truth," knoweth perfectly both the Father and the Son, as One with Them in the mystery of the Divine Trinity. Only there was no occasion to name the Holy Spirit in this place.

28—30. Christ's Invitation.

28. "Come unto Me." Does any one ask, Who are they to whom the Son wills to reveal the Father? Here, in this most free and blessed invitation, we find the answer. They are *all* who will come. For when Christ says, "all ye that labour and are heavy laden," He surely invites *all*. There are none of whom these words are not a true description; none who are not toiling, if they but knew it, under a heavy burden of sin. But, as those who do not feel their burden will not seek to rid themselves of it, so we may consider our Lord's invitation to be more peculiarly spoken to all who are *conscious* of their weary toil, who *feel* the weight of their burden and long for rest. How many weary ones, since these words were spoken, have taken comfort by them, and sought and found rest in Christ! Mark the *personal* character of the invitation. It is "Come unto *Me*." There is nothing here between the sinner and his Saviour. The weary may go direct to Christ. It has been well observed that the "rest," when lasting, becomes *peace*.

29. "Take My yoke upon you." Then there is something to bear for Christ. We cast down one burden, but we take up another. The "yoke" is a burden, and a badge of servitude. Even so says the Lord, "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up "his cross, and follow Me" (xvi. 24.). But this must not be said without remembering that which is added in the next verse. It has been thought by some that "My yoke" may mean not so much 'the 'yoke which I lay upon you' as 'the yoke which I Myself bear.' In that case the yoke would be still more exactly the cross. But this meaning does not so well accord with the next verse.

"Learn of Me." Surely, from My *example*, as the next words—

for I am meek and [z] lowly in heart: [a] and ye shall find rest unto your souls. A.D. 28.

30 [b] For My yoke *is* easy, and My burden is light.

[z] Zech. 9. 9. Phil. 2. 7. 8.
[a] Jer. 6. 16.
[b] 1 John 5. 3.

CHAPTER XII.

1 *Christ reproveth the blindness of the Pharisees concerning the breach of the sabbath,* 3 *by scriptures,* 9 *by reason,* 13 *and by a miracle.* 22 *He healeth the man possessed that was blind and dumb.* 31 *Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall never be forgiven.* 36 *Account shall be made of idle words.* 38 *He rebuketh the unfaithful, who seek after a sign:* 49 *and sheweth who is His brother, sister, and mother.*

AT that time [a] Jesus went on the sabbath day through the corn; and His disciples were an hungred, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat.

[a] Deu. 23. 25.

2 But when the Pharisees saw *it,* they said unto Him, Behold, Thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the sabbath day.

"for I am meek and lowly in heart"—seem to show. Not that we need shut out the learning from Christ's *teaching*. The scholar in Christ's school will learn in both ways, from His example and from His teaching: only the first seems more directly pointed at here.

30. **"For My yoke is easy," &c.** He that comes to Christ casts down a heavy burden and takes up a light one. So easy is the yoke, so light the burden, that it is even called "rest." How is the yoke easy, and the burden light? By the help that is given us in bearing them. By the grace that strengthens our weakness; by the love that quickens our deadness; by the hope that cheers our weariness; above all by the presence of Him, "in whom, though now ye see Him not, "yet believing, ye rejoice" (and this, observe, even in the midst of "heaviness") "with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 St. Peter i. 6, 8.).

CHAPTER XII.

1–8. The plucking of corn on the Sabbath.

St. Mark ii. 23—28. St. Luke vi. 1—5.

1. **"Began to pluck the ears of corn."** In Deut. xxiii. 24, 25, we find that it was lawful for any one in passing through a vineyard or a cornfield to pluck with the hand as much as he might wish to eat, but not to carry any away.

2. **"Not lawful."** How cavilling and bitter and uncharitable must have been the spirit which could find fault with this amount of labour as a breach of the Sabbath. Even the law might have been quoted against the Pharisees, for when in the most sacred Sabbath of the Passover it was said "no manner of work shall be done," an exception was specially made of "that which every man must eat" (Ex. xii. 16.). But they had

1. "*At that time*" Not to be interpreted too strictly, as if implying immediately after what has last been said (See the parallel accounts in St. Mark and St. Luke), but rather meaning, '*About* that 'time,' or perhaps, "In the same journey "or season" (*Alford*).

A.D. 28. 3 But He said unto them, Have ye not read
b 1 Sam. 21. 6. [b] what David did, when he was an hungred, and
they that were with him;
4 how he entered into the house of God, and
c Ex. 25. 30. Lev. 24. 5. did eat [c] the shewbread, which was not lawful for
him to eat, neither for them which were with him,
d Ex. 29. 32, 33. Lev. 8. 31. & 24. 9. [d] but only for the priests?
5 Or have ye not read in the [e] law, how that on
e Num. 28. 9. John 7. 22. the sabbath days the priests in the temple profane
the sabbath, and are blameless?
6 But I say unto you, That in this place is
f 2 Chr. 6. 18. Mal. 3. 1. [f] *one* greater than the temple.
7 But if ye had known what *this* meaneth,
g Micah 6. 6, 7, 8. ch. 9. 13. [g] **I will have mercy, and not sacrifice,** ye would
not have condemned the guiltless. Hosea 6. 6.

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truly made the law of God of none effect by their traditions (See on St. John ix. 16.).

3. "Have ye not read." Our Lord would not enter into a discussion with the Pharisees as to what was lawful and what was not lawful on the Sabbath. There was too much of that minute making of rules and drawing of distinctions. Great principles were lost in this over-scrupulousness of observance. He is content to show them from the holy Scriptures that necessity in one case, and the actual law itself in another, gave far greater freedom than they would allow to His disciples.

"What David did." David and his men took the show-bread from the Tabernacle when pressed by hunger. This consisted of twelve loaves, one for each tribe, and was renewed every Sabbath. It was not lawful for any one but the priests to partake of it. David was not blamed for thus in his need making use of the sacred bread. His life and the life of his men were of more importance than the observance of a ceremonial law. Some suppose that this act of David took place on the Sabbath, which seems probable from the history, the hallowed bread having, as it appears, been taken that same day out of the Tabernacle to be replaced with new. But this is not important to the argument, which teaches that ceremonial ordinances may be set aside without guilt in cases of need.

5. "The priests in the temple" &c. To "profane the Sabbath" means to make it like any other common day. The sacrifices which were by the law offered on the Sabbath obliged the priests to undergo far more labour than the disciples had done.

6. "One greater than the temple." Literally, 'A greater thing than 'the temple';—that is, Himself. The argument is this: If the priests were blameless in the labour they undertook on the Sabbath in the service of the Temple, much more are My disciples blameless in any thing they have done in My service. Our Lord does not say this plainly, because the Pharisees would not, and could not, receive it. He speaks however clearly enough for such as had "ears to hear."

7. "I will have mercy and not sacrifice." The repetition of this saying by our Lord shows its deep significance (See on ix. 13.).

8 For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day. A.D. 28.

9 ¶ And when He was departed thence, He went into their synagogue:

10 and, behold, there was a man which had *his* hand withered. And they asked Him, saying, [h]Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days? that they might accuse Him.

h Luke 13. 14. & 14. 3. John 9. 16.

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8. "Lord even of the sabbath day." We must not omit to notice the important verse recorded only by St. Mark (ii. 27.) before these words: "The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath." Man (that is, man's good) is the end: the sabbath and other ordinances are the means. The end is always greater than the means. Therefore the means must give way, when they do not advance the end. In fact, they are *means* no longer, but mere dead forms. The Jews made the means the end. Instead of using the sabbath for man's good, they made man a slave to the sabbath. But, if man's good was the true end and measure of sabbatical observance, then He, who came as the Author and Revealer of all good to man, had surely the right to use, and to teach others to use, the sabbath so as best to fulfil its true end. He did not come to destroy the sabbath, any more than any other part of God's law, but to fulfil it by giving to it its true and spiritual meaning (See on v. 17.). The "Son of man" has shown His lordship over the sabbath by permitting His Church, guided doubtless by His Spirit, to change the holy day from the seventh to the first, and, while still fulfilling the spirit of the fourth commandment by dedicating to God one day in seven, to exchange the Jewish sabbath for the Christian *Lord's-day*.

9—13. Healing of the man with the withered hand.

St. Mark iii. 1—5. St. Luke vi. 6—10.

10. "They asked Him." The parallel accounts in St. Mark and St. Luke do not mention this question of the "Scribes and "Pharisees," who are only said to have watched our Lord. By comparing the different accounts together, it would seem that the order of events was as follows: Jesus went into a synagogue on the sabbath-day and taught. Among the people present was a man with a withered hand; and the Scribes and Pharisees, knowing that Jesus had on other occasions disregarded their strict rules as to the observance of the sabbath, watched Him to see whether He would heal this poor man. Thereupon Jesus, knowing their thoughts, commanded the man to stand forth openly before them. They then saw plainly what He was about to do, and spoke out their thoughts, asking the question related by St. Matthew, "Is it "lawful to heal on the sabbath days?" To this our Lord answers (as

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8. "*Even.*" This word is not in the original, and is not needed for the sense in the English version.

9. "*Departed thence.*" We learn from St. Luke that this was on "another "sabbath," so that the departing may mean from that place or neighbourhood. We see in this expression, as well as in the words "*their* synagogue" (no explanation being given as to *who* are referred to in the word "*their*"), an instance of St. Matthew's inattention to the lesser particulars of time and place, as compared with St. Mark and St. Luke (See *Note* on x. 5.).

A. D. 28. 11 And He said unto them, What man shall there
[i] See Ex. 23. 4, 5. Deut. 22. 4. be among you, that shall have one sheep, and [i] if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift *it* out?

12 How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days.

13 Then saith He to the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched *it* forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other.

[k] ch. 27. 1. John 5. 18. & 10. 39. & 11. 53.
[2] Or, *took counsel.*
[l] See ch. 10. 23.

14 ¶ Then [k] the Pharisees went out, and [2] held a council against Him, how they might destroy Him.

15 But when Jesus knew *it*, [l] He withdrew Himself

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was His frequent custom) by another question, that namely related by St. Mark and St. Luke, "Is it lawful on the sabbath days to do good, or "to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it?" To which, as St. Mark tells us, they could give no reply.

11. "What man" &c. This argument is not recorded by either St. Mark or St. Luke as having been used by our Lord on this occasion. St. Luke records it as used on a different occasion, namely upon the healing on the sabbath day of a man "which had the dropsy" (St. Luke xiv. 2—6.). It is however so natural an argument that our Lord may well have used it on two so similar occasions. Our Lord condemns the unreality and hypocrisy of the extreme Sabbatarianism of the Pharisees; but His relaxations of their strictness are always with a view to acts of charity. Perhaps this may suggest as a rule for Christians, that things (such as travelling, employing others, &c.) may be fitly done on the Lord's Day when the object is the good of others and not one's own pleasure.

13. "Stretch forth thine hand." Observe how frequently some *act* is required on the part of those for whom a miracle is about to be performed, which act itself implies the performance of the miracle. The man could not stretch forth his hand while it remained withered. In the performance of the act the miracle takes place. This may illustrate the law of God's spiritual mercies. He commands the act of faith, the "Come unto Me," the "Ask," the "Seek," the "Knock," the "Strive to "enter in," the "Work out your own salvation," the "Lay hold on eternal "life." And even as Faith obeys and stretches forth her hand, the very power to do so is given, as well as the blessing sought. "Work out "your own salvation," . . "for it is God which worketh in you both to "will and to do of His good pleasure" (Phil. ii. 12, 13.).

14—21. The Pharisees plot against Jesus, who heals the multitudes in retirement.

St. Mark iii. 6—12.

14. "Held a council." St. Mark tells us that the Pharisees joined with the Herodians in this wicked plot, and St. Luke (vi. 11.) shows the spirit which prompted their enmity: "They were filled with madness," that is, with a blind rage against One who had so silenced their spiteful accusations, and put them to shame before the people.

15. "He withdrew Himself." Mark how Jesus ever retires before persecution, choosing humiliation and submission as His lot on earth,

from thence: [m] and great multitudes followed Him, A.D. 28.
and He healed them all; [m] ch. 19. 2.
16 and [n] charged them that they should not make [n] ch. 9. 30.
Him known:
17 that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by
Esaias the prophet, saying,
18 **Behold My Servant, whom I have chosen;**
My Beloved, [o] in whom My soul is well pleased: [o] ch. 3. 17. & 17. 5.
I will put My Spirit upon Him, and He shall
shew judgment to the Gentiles.
19 **He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall**
any man hear His voice in the streets.
20 **A bruised reed shall He not break, and**
smoking flax shall He not quench, till He send
forth judgment unto victory.
21 **And in His name shall the Gentiles trust.**
Is. 42. 1, 2, 3, 6.

never putting forth His power for His own sake, but only for the sake of others (See on St. Luke iv. 3.).

18. "**Behold My Servant,**" &c. This passage, like many other quotations from the Old Testament, gives the general sense of the prophecy rather than the exact words. Its object is to show that Christ, although to be manifested as Judge among the Gentiles, still would be meek and retiring in His life on earth.

19. "**He shall not strive, nor cry;**" &c. That is, He shall not be marked among men by noise and tumult and public excitement. No doubt crowds continually followed Him, and at times His voice was of necessity lifted up in exhortation or rebuke. But He continually sought to avoid this publicity, and to minister to His disciples in quiet and retirement. He desired to be known, not by His marvels of power, but by His dealings of love.

20. "**A bruised reed**"—"**smoking flax.**" These two figures represent those most needing gentle and loving treatment. "A bruised reed" is the likeness of one crushed down under the burden and guilt of sin, whose sins have "taken such hold" upon him that he "cannot look up" (Ps. xl. 12.). "Smoking flax," by which is probably meant the wick of a candle smouldering and ready to go out, represents one in whom the flame of grace is burning very low, whose faith and love are barely alight. A stern condemnation would quite break down the one; a bitter word would quench the last spark in the other. This the meek and lowly Jesus would never do. He would bind up, instead of break, the bruised reed: He would gently fan, instead of quench, the smoking flax. Was He not binding up the broken reed when He said to the sinful woman, "Neither do I condemn thee: go and sin no more" (St. John viii. 11.)? Was He not fanning the smoking flax, when He said to the Scribe, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God" (St. Mark xii. 34.)?

"**Till He send forth judgment unto victory.**" "Judgment" in this place means the severance between good and evil, and the whole

16. "*Charged them*" &c. See on viii. 4.

A.D. 28.

22 ¶ [p] Then was brought unto Him one possessed
[p] See ch. 9. 32. with a devil, blind, and dumb: and He healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw.

23 And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the Son of David?

[q] ch. 9. 34. 24 [q] But when the Pharisees heard *it*, they said,
[2] Gr. *Beelzebul*; and so ver. 27. This *Fellow* doth not cast out devils, but by [2] Beelzebub the prince of the devils.

[r] ch. 9. 4. John 2. 25. Rev. 2. 23. 25 And Jesus [r] knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand:

26 and if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand?

27 And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast *them* out? therefore they shall be your judges.

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clause may be understood thus:—'Till He establish the final and triumphant separation between good and evil.' This will not be till His second coming. Therefore we gather that the gentle and loving treatment above described will mark our Lord's dealings with men until the end. It is the character of this present dispensation.

22—30. The accusation of casting out devils by Beelzebub.

St. Mark iii. 22—27. St. Luke xi. 14—23.

22. "Blind and dumb." The effect probably of the possession by the evil spirit.

24. "By Beelzebub." It was the hearing of the effect of the miracle upon the people, who began to wonder whether Jesus might not be the expected Messiah, which caused the Pharisees to make this wicked accusation. They did not really believe what they said, but scrupled at no blasphemy which might destroy Christ's influence with the people (See on x. 25.).

25. "Jesus knew their thoughts." This shows either that what the Pharisees said they said among themselves and to the people, but not in our Lord's hearing, or else that He, hearing the accusation, knew how envious and malicious were the motives which gave rise to it.

"Every kingdom" &c. What wonderful meekness and humility does our Lord show in thus answering the hateful accusation of the Pharisees. The argument is very plain. A kingdom, or city, or family, torn by discord and fightings must come to ruin. And if Satan cast out Satan, it is just the same. He would be destroying himself, ruining his own power, bringing his own kingdom to the ground.

27. "By whom do your children cast them out?" Undoubtedly

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23. "*Son of David.*" See on ix.

28 But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then [s] the kingdom of God is come unto you. A.D. 28.

29 [t] Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house.

30 He that is not with Me is against Me; and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth abroad.

[s] Dan. 2. 44. & 7. 14. Luke 1. 33. & 17. 20, 21.
[t] Isai. 49. 24.

"your children" must mean Jewish exorcists, either "children" (that is, disciples) of the Pharisees, or simply Jews. The interpretation sometimes met with, which makes "your children" mean the Apostles, inasmuch as they were Jews by birth, cannot be defended. The question then arises, Did these Jews really cast out devils, or only pretend to do so? We need not shrink from the idea that they did *really* cast out devils in the name, and by the power, of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The Jewish historian Josephus relates that cures of this sort were common among the Jews, and, if the Egyptian sorcerers were allowed to work miracles (Ex. vii. 22. viii. 7.), and "false Christs and false "prophets" could "show great signs and wonders" (xxiv. 24.), much more may we suppose it permitted to a faithful Israelite to expel evil spirits through the power of the One true God. Still perhaps it is not necessary to the sense to understand these cures as real. If there were Jews who even *pretended* to cast out devils, and who were believed in by the people, the argument would hold good. It would then be, 'By whom, and in 'whose name do your children (that is, your disciples or fellow-country-'men) *profess* to cast out devils?'

"Your judges." Not, of course, by being appealed to in person to give their opinion, but simply by their actions and professions.

28. "By the Spirit of God." It was nevertheless by His own Divine power, but He and the Spirit are One (See on iv. 1.).

"The kingdom of God is come unto you." The presence of One among them with such powers, far greater and more astonishing than any laid claim to by the Jewish exorcists (as we may gather from ix. 33.), was sufficient to show the Pharisees, if they had not been so wilfully blind, that the heavenly kingdom of the Messiah, which they professed to be looking for, was already set up among them (See on xi. 12.).

29. "A strong man's house." Satan is the "strong man": the world is his "house": men are his "goods." Christ, by delivering men out of Satan's hands, proves that He has *bound* him, that is, conquered him, and robbed him of his power.

30. "He that is not with Me" &c. This verse sets forth the entire opposition between Satan and his followers on the one side and Christ and His followers on the other. 'You accuse Me,' our Lord would say, 'of being in league with My great enemy the devil. I have shown you 'that cannot be. No; there are two great powers in the world, totally 'opposed the one to the other. And those that are not on My side are 'on the enemy's side; those that will not help to gather in souls for God's 'harvest must help to scatter those souls from Me, and lose them for ever.' Surely these words were meant to fall with sad severity upon the Pharisees themselves. They could hardly fail to understand them as saying, 'You, who have ascribed My miracles to Satan's power, are ranging 'yourselves on Satan's side. You are not with Me, therefore you are

A.D. 28. 31 ¶ Wherefore I say unto you, [u]All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: [x]but the blasphemy *against* the *Holy* Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.

[u] Heb. 6. 4, &c. & 10. 26, 29. 1 John 5. 16.
[x] Acts 7. 51.

'against Me: you help not in gathering men for God, therefore you are 'scattering them from God.' It is important to compare this verse with the saying recorded by St. Mark (ix. 40.) and St. Luke (ix. 50.), "He "that is not against us is for us," where we must observe that the man of whom it is said was in no way *against Christ*, for he was actually casting out devils in Christ's name, but simply did not join the company of the Apostles and travel about with them.

31—37. Sin against the Holy Ghost, and other sin of the tongue.

St. Mark iii. 28—30. St. Luke xii. 10.

31. "Wherefore." There is certainly a close connection between this verse and the whole preceding passage, which is of great importance to the right understanding of the difficult saying we are now to consider respecting the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. No one who reads our Lord's terrible words can help anxiously asking, What is this unpardonable sin? To this question different answers have been given. Observe, It is not merely *sin* against the Holy Ghost: it is "*blasphemy*." All resistance to the Holy Spirit's influence is *sin* against Him. But that may find forgiveness. This cannot. Again observe, It is a sin which the Pharisees were at least in great danger of committing. They stood on the brink of the precipice, if they had not yet fallen over. Now they had wilfully ascribed to Satan the work of the Spirit of God (Observe St. Mark iii. 30.). May we not then conclude that the unpardonable sin here spoken of is such a wilful and obstinate resistance to the Holy Spirit's work as openly and deliberately to ascribe that work to the devil? Certainly, if the Holy Spirit ever ceases to strive with a man, and leaves him to a reprobate mind, it would be in the case of one seeing and knowing His Divine power, but so hating truth and holiness as to wilfully set himself to ascribe them to the devil. In these days perhaps this dreadful sin is most nearly approached by those who from sheer hatred of goodness, or for mere party purposes, cry down and blaspheme either holy truths or holy persons. It is not unfrequent to find persons troubled in mind as to the possibility of their having committed the unpardonable sin. Let such take comfort in the thought that their very trouble and distress of mind proves that they have not committed it. Had they done so, they would have had no such disturbance. They would have been hardened in their wickedness. The sin they dread is unpardonable, not because God is unable or unwilling to forgive, but because man has barred his heart against the entrance of faith and repentance.

31. "*Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.*" It should be observed that St. Mark observes the same order as St. Matthew, connecting this saying with the accusation of the Pharisees that our Lord cast out devils by Satanic power. In St. Luke's Gospel the same saying as to blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is related as spoken upon quite a different occasion, namely, as a part of the instructions given to the Apostles. (See on x. 14, 15, and on the passage in St. Luke.) It should be observed how closely this passage bears on such passages as Hebrews vi. 4—8. x. 26—31. 1 St. John v. 16.

32 And whosoever [y] speaketh a word against the Son of man, [z] it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the *world* to come. A.D. 28. [y] ch. 11. 19. & 13. 55. John 7. 12, 52. [z] Tim. 1. 13.

33 Either make the tree good, and [a] his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by *his* fruit. [a] ch. 7. 17. Luke 6. 43, 44.

34 O [b] generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, [b] ch. 3. 7. & 23. 33.

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32. "Against the Son of man." The reason why blasphemy against Christ is more pardonable than blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is because Christ is *Man* as well as God, and *in His Human nature* inferior to God, being "equal to the Father as touching His Godhead, and "inferior to the Father as touching His Manhood" (*Athan. Creed.*). Thus blasphemy "against the *Son of Man*" would be a sin against our Lord's *Human* nature, such as would be the denial of His Messiahship, the rejection of His claim of authority, and the like. Blasphemy "against the Holy Ghost" would be a sin against our Lord's *Divine* nature, such as was the attributing a manifest act of Divine power to the evil one. We must not fail to observe that it was in the denial of *Christ's* Divine power that the sin against *the Holy Ghost* seems to have lain. We have a striking instance of forgiveness vouchsafed to blasphemy against the Son of Man in the case of St. Paul, "who was "before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious" (1 Tim. i. 13.).

"Neither in the world to come." It has been argued, both in ancient and in modern times, that if one sin is declared unpardonable in the world to come, other sins must be pardonable in that world. In other words, this verse has been used to support the doctrine of a farther trial and opportunity of grace beyond the grave. This is building a heavy building on a very light foundation. Our Lord's words may very easily be understood as a strong expression for *never*: shutting out all hope, whether of repentance and pardon in this life, or of mercy in the day of judgment.

33. "Either make the tree good," &c. The word "make" in this place seems used in the sense of 'reckon' or 'set down.' Our Lord's object is to carry His hearers to the *source* of words and actions, and to show that the nature of that source, and the nature of that which flows from it, must be the same. The saying was to be applied first to Himself, and secondly to the Pharisees. To *Himself*, inasmuch as they had ascribed the good work He had performed to an evil source, and He would teach them that, when they beheld what they could not deny to be good, they should believe that it proceeded from a good source. To the *Pharisees*, inasmuch as their malicious and blasphemous sayings proved that the heart which could give rise to such things was evil. Possibly however we may give a rather fuller force to the word "make" than that above given, and may see in it a hint that when man would repent and reform, he must begin with the heart, and "*make*" that good (not of himself, but by the grace of God) before he can purify the outward actions and words. If a stream is to be cleansed, it must be done by cleansing the fountain, not by filtering the water as it flows.

A.D. 28. speak good things? [c] for out of the abundance of the
[c] Luke 6. 45. heart the mouth speaketh.

35 A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.

36 But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.

37 For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

[d] ch. 16. 1. Mark 8. 11. John 2. 18. 1 Cor. 1. 22. [e] Isai. 57. 3. ch. 16. 4. Mark 8. 38. John 4. 48.

38 ¶ [d] Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from Thee.

39 But He answered and said unto them, An evil and [e] adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and

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34. "**Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.**" Literally 'Out of the *overflow* of the heart.' The tongue is the truest sign of the state of the heart, which accounts for words being spoken of as of such momentous importance. The fountain within will overflow in the words of the mouth, and show of what sort it is. (Read St. James iii. 2—12.)

35. "**Treasure.**" Or 'storehouse.' This is another figure teaching the same truth as that taught in 33.

36. "**Idle.**" That is, 'light, thoughtless, careless.' What a jealous watchfulness over our least words does this sentence enjoin! And if for *thoughtless* words we shall give account, how much more for *wilfully wicked* words!

37. "**Justified**"—"**condemned.**" "Justified" has here the sense of 'acquitted,' pronounced not guilty. In many other places it is said that we shall be judged by our *works*, but works include words, for works embrace our whole outward conduct, of which words form an important part. The foregoing verses point out to us the true reason why works and words shall be the measure of our judgment. It is because they are the measure of the state of our hearts.

38—42. Seeking after a sign.

St. Luke xi. 29—32.

38. "**Answered.**" This word shows the connection with the foregoing conversation. Our Lord claimed to cast out devils by the power of God. Some malignantly ascribed His works to the power of Satan. Others asked for a sign from heaven, that is, probably, some greater and more wonderful sign than they had already witnessed; or a sign of a different nature, one displayed in the sky, and thus more unmistakeably convincing—one which no man could dare to set down to the power of Satan.

39. "**Adulterous.**" This is a common figure in the Old Testament.

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38. "*Certain of the Scribes and of the Pharisees.*" Not the same who had accused Jesus of casting out devils by Beelzebub, as we learn from St. Luke xi. 16.

there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: A.D. 28.

40 [f] for as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

[f] Jonah 1. 17.

41 The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and [g] shall condemn it: [h] because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas *is* here.

[g] See Jer. 3. 11. Ezek. 16. 51, 52. Rom. 2. 27.
[h] Jonah 3. 5.

42 [i] The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon *is* here.

[i] 1 Kin. 10. 1. 2 Chron. 9. 1.

The Jewish people were of old what the Christian Church is now, married by a solemn covenant to God, so that every faithlessness to God might be called adultery,—that is, faithlessness to the marriage vow. It was the faithlessness and estrangement from God of the Jews which led them to reject Him whom God sent, and to require more convincing proofs than God had already given them.

"No sign." No special sign—no new miracle—no wonder in the heavens—to prove what there was sufficient proof of already. Possibly no such sign would have really convinced the obstinate hearts of those who asked for it, and it might have been said of them, "If they hear "not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though "one rose from the dead." *That* sign however they were to have given them, as is said in the next verse.

40. "Jonas." The history of Jonas was a sign to the faithless Jews: 1. As a direct prophecy, by type, of our Lord's death and resurrection: 2. As a rebuke to their stubbornness, inasmuch as the Ninevites repented at the preaching of Jonas, whereas *they* rejected "a greater "than Jonas." Probably also in this latter application our Lord is looking forward to the effect of His own Resurrection, and comparing the appearance of Jonas at Nineveh after his miraculous restoration from a living death to His own re-appearance after His burial "in "the heart of the earth." At any rate this seems implied in the verse which St. Luke supplies, and which speaks of Jonah being a *sign to the Ninevites.*

42. "The queen of the south." Sheba was in Arabia, and south of the Holy Land. This is another example from the Old Testament which should be a sign to the stubborn Jews. The queen of Sheba travelled far to hear the wisdom of Solomon. *They* shut their ears against the words of Him who was Himself "the Truth."

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41. "*A greater.*" As above in 6, and in St. Luke xi. 31, the word "greater" is here, and in the next verse, neuter, being literally 'a greater thing' or 'something 'greater.'

A. D. 28.

43 ¶ When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, [k] he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none.

[k] Job 1. 7. 1 Pet. 5. 8.

44 Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth *it* empty, swept, and garnished.

45 Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: [l] and the last *state* of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.

[l] Heb. 6. 4. & 10. 26. 2 Pet. 2. 20, 21, 22.

43—45. The Return of the unclean spirit.

St. Luke xi. 24—26.

43. "The unclean spirit." This wonderful parable, suggested by the miracle and conversation which have gone before, finds its first explanation in the history of the Jewish people. Our Lord Himself shows us how to apply it in the last words of it, "Even so shall it be "also unto this wicked generation" (45.). Keeping this in view, we ask what is the "unclean spirit"? It plainly represents some crying sin which had been cast out of the Jewish people—probably their ancient sin of idolatry.

"He walketh through dry places." The unclean spirit is pictured as wandering in dry—that is, desert and uninhabited—places, seeking a place of rest. May we gather from this description, given by Him who *knew*, something as to the real acting of evil spirits? (See on viii. 31.)

44. "Empty, swept, and garnished." "Empty," because not filled with any new and holier guest: "swept and garnished" with the ceremonial cleansings and outside righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees. This describes the state of the Jewish people of the generation with whom Christ dwelt.

45. "Seven other spirits." It is vain to ask what are the particular sins to be understood under the figure of these seven spirits, nor are we to suppose that our Lord meant an exact number. The parable simply teaches that the Jews of our Lord's generation, though freed from one great sin, yet, because they rejected Him and His Holy Spirit, and contented themselves with the bare outward garnishing of Pharisaic righteousness, would be victims to many more even worse sins, and so end in a worse state than they were in at first. Some of the new sins which took possession of the Jews we can see. Doubtless pride, hypocrisy, unbelief, and blasphemy, were amongst the number. Even murder may be one, inasmuch as on them lay the guilt of crucifying the Redeemer. There is a difficulty as to the one "unclean spirit," which was cast out, *returning with* the others, if we take the parable in the sense above given, for the Jews did not fall again into idolatry. But doubtless, if they did not fall into this sin in the *letter*, they did so abundantly in the *spirit*, setting up their "idols in their heart" (Ezek. xiv. 3.), and becoming slaves to "covetousness, which is idolatry" (Col. iii. 5.).

The lesson spoken in the first instance to the Jews may be applied to ourselves, both as a nation, and individually. As a nation, it should

46 ¶ While He yet talked to the people, behold, A. D. 28.
His mother and [m] His brethren stood without, de- [m] ch. 13. 55. Mark 6. 3. John 2. 12. & 7. 3, 5. Acts 1. 14. 1 Cor. 9. 5. Gal. 1. 19.
siring to speak with Him.

47 Then one said unto Him, Behold, Thy mother and Thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with Thee.

48 But He answered and said unto him that told Him, Who is My mother? and who are My brethren?

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convey to us a solemn warning lest, having, as we trust, been delivered by God's mercy from grievous heresies in the Reformation of our Church, we suffer other evils, no less dangerous, to occupy the place of those cast out. To have been set free from such a perilous heresy as the worship of the blessed Virgin and other saints, and then to fall under the dominion of covetousness, worldliness, looseness of morals, unbelief, party-spirit, formalism, sloth,—this would be to make the "last state . . . worse "than the first." As individuals, we may receive from this parable an equally grave warning. It should teach us that when we cast forth some crying sin, we leave ourselves in great danger of falling into even worse, if we are not careful to see that our hearts are filled with God's Holy Spirit. Thus a drunkard may reform, and cast forth, with pain and difficulty, the demon of his drunkenness. But if he leave his soul "empty," and "garnished" only with an outward decency of conduct, not only will his old enemy be likely to return with new power, but he is in danger of being taken possession of by new enemies, such as pride, self-righteousness, hypocrisy, or some other form of evil, which lurked in him before unsuspected.

46—50. Christ's mother and brethren.

St. Mark iii. 31—35. St. Luke viii. 19—21.

46. "His mother and His brethren." St. Mark gives us the probable clue to this event. Our Lord and His Apostles were so engaged in the work of teaching and healing that they had not time even for taking necessary food, so that His friends "went out to lay hold on Him; "for they said, He is beside Himself" (See on St. Mark iii. 20, 21.). It was probably with such thoughts, and in order to get Him away from the crowd, and make Him rest and take food, that "His mother and "His brethren" sought to speak with Him. It is generally considered probable that Joseph was dead before our Lord's public ministry began, as he never appears in the Gospels afterwards.

48. "Who is My mother? and who are My brethren?" That is, Who are, in the deep truth of things, most closely united to Me? Who bear the nearest and most blessed relationship to Me?

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46. "*His brethren.*" See on xiii. 55. The event here related is given in the same place by St. Mark, but is placed after the Parable of the Sower by St. Luke. All however happened on "the "same day" (xiii. 1.), and as St. Matthew and St. Mark are here more precise in stating the occasion, the former using the words "While He yet talked to the "people" in the verse before us, we must conclude that the order of events is preserved here by the two earlier Evangelists, rather than, as is more usual, by St. Luke.

A.D. 28. 49 And He stretched forth His hand toward His disciples, and said, Behold My mother and My brethren!

[n] See John 15. 14. Gal. 5. 6. & 6. 15. Col. 3. 11. Heb. 2. 11.

50 For [n] whosoever shall do the will of My Father which is in heaven, the same is My brother, and sister, and mother.

CHAPTER XIII.

3 *The parable of the sower and the seed:* 18 *the exposition of it.* 24 *The parable of the tares,* 31 *of the mustard seed,* 33 *of the leaven,* 44 *of the hidden treasure,* 45 *of the pearl,* 47 *of the drawnet cast into the sea:* 53 *and how Christ is contemned of His own countrymen.*

THE same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea side.

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50. "Whosoever shall do the will of My Father." It is not the tie of relationship in the flesh which binds closest to Christ. He had an earthly mother, but He had a heavenly Father: and those who were united to Him through that Father were more closely united than those who were united to Him through that mother. We must observe that our Lord is by no means drawing a *contrast* between His mother and brethren on the one side, and those who do the will of His Father on the other, as though the former were shut out from the blessing of the latter. There can be no doubt that His own blessed mother possessed the double blessedness, firstly of the closest earthly relationship, and secondly of the nearest heavenly union, through obedience to the will of His Father in heaven.

"Sister." Observe our Lord's addition of this relationship, and omission of the mention of *Father*. He would hallow all earthly ties by making them emblems of heavenly; but 'Father' He could not say, for He had no Father except that heavenly One, of whom He was even then speaking; and to have used the word again would have confused and misled His hearers.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE SEVEN PARABLES.

1—9. The Sower.

St. Mark iv. 1—9. St. Luke viii. 4—8.

(For explanation see 18—23.)

1. "By the sea side." This, it need hardly be said, was the Sea of Galilee. Stanley, in his "Sinai and Palestine," describes a spot upon the shores of this lake, which we may well conceive to have been such as that which Jesus looked upon, as He sat in the boat and taught the people on the shore. In this one spot, he says, was seen at once every detail of the great parable of the Sower. "There was the undulating "cornfield descending to the water's edge. There was the *trodden path-* "*way* running through the midst of it, with no fence or hedge to prevent "the seed from falling here and there on either side of it, or upon it; "itself hard with the constant tramp of horse and mule and human feet. "There was the *good* rich soil, which distinguishes the whole of that

2 And great multitudes were gathered together unto Him, so that [a]He went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore. A.D. 28. [a] Luke 5. 3.

3 And He spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow;

4 and when he sowed, some *seeds* fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up.

5 Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth:

6 and when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.

"plain" (the plain of Gennesareth) "and its neighbourhood from the "bare hills descending elsewhere into the lake, and which, when there "is no interruption, produces one vast mass of corn. There was the *rocky* "*ground* of the hill-side, protruding here and there through the corn-"fields, as elsewhere through the grassy slopes. There were the large "bushes of thorn . . . springing up in the very midst of the waving "wheat."

3. "Parables." A parable is a story with an inner, or spiritual, meaning. From verse 53 we gather that the seven parables given in this chapter were spoken either on the same occasion, or about the same time. They may have been mingled with others not recorded, and thus be gathered by the Evangelist out of the teaching of more than one day. The difficulty of supposing them spoken on the same occasion lies in the portion of the chapter (10—23) which follows the parable of the Sower, and which describes a *private* conversation with the disciples. It has been suggested that after this first parable our Lord may have retired for a while, to give time for it to sink into the hearts of His hearers, and returning later in the day may then have uttered the three following parables, which, with that of the Sower, were spoken publicly to the multitude. The remaining three were spoken privately in the house (See 36.) to the disciples alone. But, whether the seven parables of this chapter were spoken by our Lord in close connection with one another and on the same day, or whether St. Matthew was guided to select them out of a larger amount of similar teaching and arrange them together as they stand, they certainly present a marvellous picture, both practically and prophetically, of the kingdom of Christ. This will be drawn out under the several parables.

5. "Stony places." In St. Luke's Gospel it is "a rock," and the two expressions taken together make it clear what sort of place it was. It was not soil very full of stones, as we might gather from St. Matthew's expression, nor was it a bare rock, as we might suppose from St. Luke's. It was a shallow bed of soil on the top of a slab or ledge of rock. On such a spot the blade would soon appear, because the seed would be near the surface, and, as long as the weather remained cool and wet, it would grow and thrive, but the hot summer sun would soon dry up the thin layer of soil, and scorch and burn up all its greenness.

A. D. 28. 7 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them.

8 But other fell into good ground, and brought
b Gen. 26. 12. forth fruit, some [b] an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.

c ch. 11. 15. 9 [c] Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

10 ¶ And the disciples came, and said unto Him,
d ch. 11. 25. & 16. 17. 1 Cor. 2. 10. 1 John 2. 27. Why speakest Thou unto them in parables?

11 He answered and said unto them, Because [d] it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the
e ch. 25. 29. Mark 4. 25. Luke 8. 18. & 19. 26. kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

12 [e] For whosoever hath, to him shall be given,

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7. "Among thorns." That is, among the *roots* of thorns, where the ground had not been cleaned. In our country brambles and briars would best explain the "thorns." If these were only cut down in some rough corner of a field, the roots being left in the ground, any grains of corn which fell there would struggle in vain with the coarser stronger weeds which would spring up with them.

8. "An hundredfold." That is, a hundred grains for each one sown. It is said of Isaac that he sowed, and "received in the same year a hun-"dredfold, and the Lord blessed him" (Gen. xxvi. 12.). This is by no means a large increase for England, where on good soil the yield is considerably in excess of a hundredfold, each grain throwing up several straws, and each ear containing on the average between forty and fifty grains.

10—17. Why Jesus used parables.

St. Mark iv. 10—13. St. Luke viii. 9, 10.

10. "The disciples came." It appears from this verse that our Lord was no longer in the same place. He must have retired from the crowd, possibly for a short space of rest, before this conversation with the disciples could take place. St. Mark says it was "when He was alone."

11. "Because it is given unto you" &c. "The mysteries of the "kingdom of heaven" mean those deeper and more hidden truths of Christ's kingdom which could not be known except by revelation from God. Our Lord declares His reason for speaking in parables, rather than more openly, to be *in order to veil or hide these mysteries* from those "without" (St. Mark), that is, those without the circle of his true disciples. That this is the meaning of our Lord appears even more distinctly in the parallel passages in St. Mark and in St. Luke than in the passage before us; and, whatever may be the difficulty of understanding this reason, it is impossible to explain it away. Plainly our Lord desired that the bulk of His hearers should not understand the mysteries of His kingdom. Why was this? The next two verses explain why.

12. "For whosoever hath," &c. The disciples had won the privilege of farther light by accepting and using that which had been offered them. The others had forfeited the privilege by refusing it. Here is the true ground for our Lord's conduct. It was a judgment,—a punishment,—

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9. "*Who hath ears*" &c. See on xi. 15.

and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. A.D. 28.

13 Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.

14 And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, [f] **By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:**

[f] Ezek. 12. 2. John 12. 40. Acts 28. 26, 27. Rom. 11. 8. 2 Cor. 3. 14, 15.

15 **for this people's heart is waxed gross, and** *their* **ears** [g] **are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with** *their* **eyes, and hear with** *their* **ears, and should understand with** *their* **heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.**

[g] Heb. 5. 11.

Isaiah 6. 9, 10.

16 But [h] blessed *are* your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear.

[h] ch. 16. 17. Luke 10. 23, 24 John 20. 29.

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a taking away from those who had not, because they *would not* have,—a locking up of the well to those who refused to taste of the waters of life. It was no arbitrary rejection of those "without." They had rejected themselves, and this was only their deserved punishment. Jesus would have saved them, had they been willing; but they had refused His repeated invitation, and now to reveal to them the blessed truths of His kingdom would only be to cast pearls before swine (See on vii. 6.).

15. "Lest at any time" &c. Observe it is the people themselves who have brought about this hopeless state by their own obstinacy. The form of words is somewhat different in the Prophet, and again in St. John's version (xii. 40.), yet the meaning is the same: for God does not hide the truth except from such as have rejected it, nor refuse grace except to such as have despised it, nor harden the heart except of such as have wilfully refused to be softened. Although it is not stated here, yet it is well to observe that parables were not meant to be *only* a veil to screen the truth from those who were neither willing, nor deserving, to receive it. This was *one* use they had, and is the reason given by our Lord in this place. But parables were certainly meant also to lead humble and earnest minds to a deeper and fuller knowledge of the truth. Nay, even for the multitude they would be a means of inducing some to search into the truth; and we read that our Lord used them expressly in order to speak the word unto them "as they were able to "hear it" (St. Mark iv. 33.). Parables are like pictures shown to children, revealing no more than those who look at them are capable of understanding, and thus at the same time both veiling sacred truths from careless eyes, and exciting in the willing learner the longing to understand them.

16. "Blessed are your eyes, for they see." That is, they truly discern the truths presented to them. Therefore more light is given to them.

16, 17. "*Blessed are your eyes,*" *&c.* This saying is repeated on a different occasion. See *Margin.*

A.D. 28. 17 For verily I say unto you, [i] That many pro-
[i] Heb. 11. 13. 1 Pet. 1. 10, 11. phets and righteous *men* have desired to see *those things* which ye see, and have not seen *them;* and to hear *those things* which ye hear, and have not heard *them.*

18 ¶ Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower.
[k] ch. 4. 23. 19 When any one heareth the word [k] of the kingdom, and understandeth *it* not, then cometh the wicked *one*, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.

20 But he that received the seed into stony
[l] Isai. 58. 2. Ezek. 33. 31, 32. John 5. 35. places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon [l] with joy receiveth it;

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17. "**Many prophets and righteous men**" &c. This verse is yet more true of *us*. For *our* knowledge of the "mysteries of the kingdom "of heaven" is greater than that which even the most favoured Apostles at this time possessed. Let us remember that "unto whomsoever much "is given, of him shall be much required" (St. Luke xii. 48.).

18—23. Explanation of the Sower.

St. Mark iv. 14—20. St. Luke viii. 11—15.

18. "**Therefore.**" That is, because, having well used the light already given, the disciples had won the privilege of more light.

"**The Sower.**" We cannot doubt that this is, in the first place, our Lord Himself. He is the great Sower. After Him, His ministers are also Sowers. But, inasmuch as they speak in His Name, and deliver His message, and act by His authority, it is He who is the Sower still (See on St. John iv. 38.).

19. "**The way side.**" Four states of heart are described under the four places in which the seed fell. The "Way-side" pictures a *hard* heart, into which the word no more enters than the seed into the well-beaten path-way. The "word of the kingdom" is the message which it is the privilege of Christ's kingdom to deliver to man. Observe how constantly our Lord speaks of the "kingdom" as *present* here on earth. The hard heart "understandeth not" the message, because it will not understand. And the message, never understood, is quickly forgotten. The devil takes care of that; for he "catcheth away" the good seed, vain and evil thoughts coming, like birds of the air, to carry away even the remembrance of the word.

20. "**Stony places.**" "The rock," in St. Luke: that is, as has been said (See on 5.), a thin bed of soil on the flat surface of a rock. This place pictures a *shallow* heart; one with no depth of character, no reality or earnestness; one whose religion is all on the surface, and has no deep root. This character is just the opposite to such as St. Paul speaks of, when he prays that the Ephesians may be "*rooted and grounded* in love" (Eph. iii. 17.), or urges the Philippians to "continue in the faith *grounded* "*and settled*" (Col. i. 23.). The shallow heart very often receives the

21 yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by [m] he is offended. A.D. 28.

[m] ch. 11. 6. 2 Tim. 1. 15.

22 [n] He also that received seed [o] among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.

[n] ch. 19. 23. Mark 10. 23. Luke 18. 24. 1 Tim. 6. 9. 2 Tim. 4. 10.

[o] Jer. 4. 3.

23 But he that received seed into the good ground

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word *at first* with joy. Weak characters are easily excited. Just as the seed in the shallow ground comes up quickly, because it is so near the surface, so religion in the shallow heart makes a great show for a little while, when the feelings are stirred, and promises well while all is smooth and easy. How often, under religious excitement, do shallow hearts thus receive the word with joy, and mistake the mere passing outburst of feeling for a deep and abiding conversion! Deep waters flow still.

21. "Yet hath he not root in himself." No deep and lasting principle; no thorough and abiding change of heart. The surface has been stirred, but the heart below remains the same. See how Christ ever carries our thoughts down from the outer actions to the inner root from which they draw their real character. St. Luke supplies a still deeper thought in the words, "because it lacked moisture." The "moisture" is to the root, what the oil is to the lamps in the parable of the Ten Virgins. It is the "supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ" (Phil. i. 19.). If there is no store of the grace of the Holy Spirit, constantly sought and constantly used, there can be no perseverance. When the strength and stedfastness of the religion is tried by "tribulation or persecution," or by any sort of "temptation" (St. Luke), then it is found wanting.

"By and by he is offended." That is, immediately he is made to fall (See on v. 29. and xvii. 27.).

22. "Among the thorns." The way-side pictured a *hard* heart: the stony place a *shallow* heart: the thorny ground pictures a *worldly* heart. The "thorns" are interpreted as "the care of this world and the deceitfulness of riches," to which is added by St. Mark "the lust of other things"; or (as in St. Luke) the "cares and riches and pleasures of this life." When the roots of these are left in the ground of the heart, the good seed has little chance of thriving. The ill weeds are the stronger growers and will be sure to smother it. The character here pictured may be deep and strong. There may be a firm will and much resolution. But the roots of evil passions have fastened themselves tightly in the heart; the love of worldly things has struck down deep; and though there may be a struggle for a time, and good principles may contend with the bad, yet, so long as the latter are not rooted out, the struggle is a very hopeless one. It is the vain attempt to serve God *and* mammon. God will not have half the heart. If it is not all His, it will soon be all Mammon's.

23. "Good ground." "An honest and good heart" (St. Luke.). No heart is this by nature, for "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God" (1 Cor. ii. 14.). The soil must be prepared, and

A. D. 28. is he that heareth the word, and understandeth *it;* which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

24 ¶ Another parable put He forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field:

25 but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.

26 But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.

27 So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?

28 He said unto them, An enemy hath done this.

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prepared by God's grace. The hard must be softened, the shallow deepened, the weedy cleaned, before it can bear fruit. And then it is not all alike. It "beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundred-"fold, some sixty, some thirty." This difference may be of two sorts. It may spring from a difference of *capacity in the ground*, in which case it would be like the difference in the amounts gained by the first two servants in the parable of the Talents (xxv. 16, 17.), both of whom had improved their talents in the same proportion, having doubled the original sum, thus showing equal faithfulness though with different results. Or the difference may spring from a difference of *faithfulness in bringing forth fruit*, in which case it would be like the difference in the amounts gained by the first two servants in the parable of the Pounds (St. Luke xix. 16—19.), each of whom had the same opportunity but made a different use of it, one having shown greater faithfulness and diligence than the other.

24—30. The Tares.

(For the explanation see 36—43.)

24. "Another parable." In the "Sower" Jesus had shown the manner in which the "word of the kingdom" enters into the heart of man. This must plainly be the first step. Till some have received that word, there can be no kingdom, or at least no visible kingdom, for, as far as this world is concerned, it would be a kingdom without subjects. In this second parable, the "Tares" (which is recorded by St. Matthew only), we find the kingdom begun. The first step has been taken. The Gospel is set up in the world. The "Sower" teaches the inward effect of the kingdom of heaven in the heart: the "Tares" shows its outward establishment in the world.

25. "Tares." These are a wild or bastard wheat, which, when young, it is difficult to distinguish from the true wheat.

28. "An enemy hath done this." This mode of injuring a neighbour is sometimes practised to this day, and is not unheard of even in this land.

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24. "*Likened unto a man.*" See *Note* on xi. 16.

The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? A.D. 28.

29 But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.

30 Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but [p] gather the wheat into my barn. [p] ch. 3. 12.

31 ¶ Another parable put He forth unto them, saying, [q] The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: [q] Isai. 2. 2, 3. Micah 4. 1.

32 which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.

"Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?" Stanley, in his book upon Palestine, mentions seeing some women and children in Galilee weeding out these tares from a field of wheat. A practised eye learns to know them, but, if they were spitefully sown thick among the wheat, it would be very difficult to separate them.

31, 32. The Mustard-seed.

St. Mark iv. 30—32. St. Luke xiii. 18, 19.

This parable declares the outward growth of Christ's kingdom, from its first small beginning to its final overspreading of the world. It therefore most fitly follows upon the "Tares," which describes its mixed character, and state of probation. The "Tares" might discourage the faithful subject of the kingdom, as showing how strong and how abundant evil is, and will be, in that kingdom. The "Mustard-seed" cheers and comforts, as showing that, notwithstanding the presence of the evil, the kingdom will grow and spread its blessings far and wide.

32. "Least of all seeds." This need not be pressed too strictly, any more than the words "greatest among herbs." The tree spoken of is probably one common in the Holy Land, the seed of which (used like our mustard) is exceedingly small in comparison with the size of the plant. The small seed represents the small and seemingly weak beginning of the Kingdom of heaven. At first this was only Christ Himself and a few humble followers. And even after the Ascension, we are told, "the number of the names together were about an hundred and twenty" (Acts i. 15.). How greatly has the tree grown since then! It is reckoned that there are in the world now more than three hundred millions of professing Christians; but these are less than one third of the population of the world, which is reckoned at about a thousand millions.

"The birds of the air." It does not seem to be pressing the parable too closely to see in this part of it a picture of the people of various nations being gathered in to the Church of Christ, and finding there protection and peace.

A.D. 28. 33 ¶ Another parable spake He unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three [2] measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

[2] The word in the Greek is *a measure containing about a peck and a half, wanting a little more than a pint.*

34 ¶ All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake He not unto them:

35 that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, **I will open my mouth in parables; [r] I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.**

[r] Rom. 16. 25, 26. 1 Cor. 2. 7. Eph. 3. 9. Col. 1. 26.

Psalm 78. 2.

33. The Leaven.

St. Luke xiii. 20, 21.

This parable describes the *inward* growth of Christ's kingdom in the hearts of its subjects; or, in other words, its purifying and sanctifying power. It is needed to fill up and complete the picture of the growth of the Church of Christ. If we had only the "Mustard-seed," we might fix our eyes too much upon the outward increase of the Church in size and number. In the "Leaven" we learn to discern its growth in its reforming influence upon a sinful world. We may note that in place of this parable St. Mark gives another, the "Springing of the corn," which teaches nearly the same lesson (St. Mark iv. 26—29.).

33. "Leaven." Generally used to represent something bad (as in St. Luke xii. 1.), but here plainly the blessed sanctifying influence of Christ's kingdom in the world. That holy influence works secretly and silently, but it works very powerfully, changing (though by slow degrees) the moral state of the world, and purifying the hearts of believers. There are two practical questions which we should ask, when we read this parable. 1, Is the leaven of Christ's kingdom working in my heart, and changing its corrupt nature? 2, Am I doing what I can to leaven those around me with the same holy leaven?

"Three measures." There is probably no special significance in the quantity here named, which would be simply an ordinary quantity to bake at one time.

"Till the whole was leavened." This is surely a prophecy full of hope for the future of the world, and answering to that, given by two prophets of old, which declares that "the earth shall be full of the "knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Isa. xi. 9. and Hab. ii. 14.).

34, 35. Christ speaking in Parables.

St. Mark iv. 33, 34.

35. "The prophet." This was Asaph, as we see by referring to the Psalm quoted. He opened his mouth in parables, and declared hard sentences of old. But this was fulfilled in a far truer and fuller manner by Christ, who was not only Himself the "Truth," but also spake, as God, by the prophets of old, and could therefore best interpret His own language. It was the *Spirit of Christ* which was in "the prophets, "and testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that "should follow" (1 St. Pet. i. 11.).

36 ¶ Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and His disciples came unto Him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field. A.D. 28.

37 He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man;

38 [s]the field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are [t]the children of the wicked *one;*

39 the enemy that sowed them is the devil: [u]the

[s] ch. 24. 14. & 28. 19. Mark 16. 15, 20. Luke 24. 47. Rom. 10. 18. Col. 1. 6.

[t] Gen. 3. 15. John 8. 44. Acts 13. 10. 1 John 3. 8.

[u] Joel 3. 13. Rev. 14. 15.

36—43. Explanation of the "Tares."

37. "He that sowed." In this case the Sower must be limited to the "Son of Man" far more strictly than in the parable of the Sower. For *there* the seed was the word of God; and this others may sow for Christ. *Here* the seed has a different meaning, and can only be sown by Him who "quickeneth whom He will" (St. John v. 21.).

38. "The field is the world." These words have given rise to much controversy, some in ancient times maintaining that, because our Lord says, "The field is the *world*," it is wrong to apply what follows to the state of the *Church*. But we must remember that the whole parable is about the "kingdom of heaven," that is, the Church. Besides the parable of the Draw-net sufficiently shows that what is here described is true of the *Church;* and moreover the servants' wish to gather the tares out of the field would lose its meaning, if understood of the *world as opposed to the Church*. The truth is, our Lord might quite as truly have said, 'The field is the kingdom of heaven': only His prophetic Eye looks forward over the ages to the time when the Church shall be as wide as the world, and the good seed shall be sown in every land. Wherever Christ sows, there the world becomes His kingdom. The sowing claims it as His. It is thenceforth His field.

"The children of the kingdom." This expression is used by our Lord on another occasion (viii. 12.) in a very different sense. There He meant by the words the Jewish people,—the outward members, by calling and privilege, of God's older kingdom. Now He means the true and living children of the new and heavenly kingdom,—those in whom the word sown had taken deep root, making them to become themselves "good seed" in the Lord's field.

"The children of the wicked one." Observe how Christ divides all into two great classes. To an all-seeing eye they are doubtless so divided always; but not to the eye of man. Man cannot judge of his fellow-man. But each may judge, if he will, of himself. And God judges perfectly of all. Though it is not a part of the parable, yet it is well to note that in Christ's field, though each is at any given time one of the good seed or one of the tares, yet each may change and become the other. This must warn the one, and encourage the other.

39. "The devil." Observe, Christ does not satisfy our curiosity by enlarging at all upon the mysterious subject of the permission of evil. It is enough for us to know that sin is of the devil. The tares are not sown by Christ. But what and when is this sowing of the tares? It can hardly be Satan's first work in ruining the world, because it is described

A.D. 28. harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels.

40 As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world.

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as coming *after* the sowing of the good seed. No doubt (to speak in the language of the parable) before the sowing of the good seed the field was full of thorns and thistles, but the good Sower prepared it for Himself and sowed it with good seed. And *then* came the enemy's sowing. This then must represent Satan's special work of introducing evil wherever good is going on. Where the Church is planted, there will he especially delight to sow all seeds of evil and roots of bitterness. And this sowing by the evil one is secret and crafty. It is "while men slept," which is not to be understood of any special negligence on the part of those who might have guarded the field, for the servants seem to have been in the main both watchful and zealous, but simply as meaning 'by night,' and thus implying secrecy and subtlety.

It is very remarkable that our Lord gives no explanation of the servants' request to be allowed to pull up the tares, nor of their master's refusal. This has been often treated as the main point in the parable, which it can hardly be when our Lord omits it in His explanation. Still it is doubtless very important, and perhaps it is not explained because it needs little explanation. What then is the spiritual significance of the servants' wish to gather up the tares from among the wheat? Surely it points to that longing, which is so natural, and yet (as Christ shows) so mistaken, and which has so often caused grievous confusion in the Lord's field,—the longing to frame a church which shall be perfectly pure and faultless. This longing, which, though unwise, is yet a holy longing in itself, has been the cause of many of the divisions which have rent the Christian body. Men have fancied they could form a holier society by separating from that in which they beheld so large a mingling of evil. They wish to have nothing but wheat in the field. Now this is, first of all, contrary to Christ's will, who says, "Let both "grow together until the harvest." Secondly, it is beyond man's wisdom and power to effect; for what human eye can discern aright between the upspringing wheat and tares? What human system can righteously effect the separation? Thirdly, even could it be once effected, it could not long retain its character, for the purest society will after a while be defiled by unworthy members. Fourthly, it would be rejecting a divinely appointed instrument of discipline, for the good are doubtless to be purified and refined by their contact with evil, which it is their duty to resist, and overcome, and, if it may be, convert to good. Fifthly, it is cutting off from the evil the chance of amendment by the quiet daily influence of the good. It need scarcely be added that the refusal to allow the tares to be rooted out in no way affects the question of Church discipline towards notorious sinners. That is only like the removing some specially noxious weed here and there from the field.

"The harvest is the end of the world." It is necessary to point out continually the Scriptural proofs that the *final* state of endless bliss or woe begins only at "the end of the world." Popular language and belief is very faulty on this point. (See the whole of xxv, and read the description of the world's harvest in Rev. xiv. 14—16.)

40. "The tares are gathered." In the parable itself the order to

41 The Son of man shall send forth His angels, A.D. 28.
[x] and they shall gather out of His kingdom all [2] things that offend, and them which do iniquity;
42 [y] and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: [z] there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.
43 [a] Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. [b] Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.
44 ¶ Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto

[x] ch. 18. 7. 2 Pet. 2. 1, 2.
[2] Or, *scandals.*
[y] ch. 3. 12. Rev. 19. 20. & 20. 10.
[z] ver. 50. ch. 8. 12.
[a] Dan. 12. 3. 1 Cor. 15. 42, 43, 58.
[b] ver. 9.

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the reapers is, "Gather ye together *first* the tares." This may perhaps teach us that the true view of the final separation is not so much that out of a mixed society will be gathered *two new* bodies, one of the saved and the other of the lost; but rather that the already existing society will be cleansed and purified by the casting out of it of all evil, so that the militant Church will become the triumphant Church, and the Divine Bridegroom will at last "present it unto Himself a glorious "Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing" (Eph. v. 27.). This is precisely the meaning of the next three verses.

41. "All things that offend." Literally, all stumbling-blocks. This is a wider expression than the following words—"them which do "iniquity." The latter means simply all wilful impenitent sinners. The former *may* include all the evils which cling to our imperfect state, even the faults and failings of the righteous; but, from the way in which their *destruction* is spoken of, the word seems rather to refer to *persons* who cause offence than to the offences themselves.

43. "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun." Doubtless with that glory which was manifested in our Lord at His Transfiguration, for, when He comes, He "shall change our vile body, that it may be "fashioned like unto His glorious body" (Phil. iii. 21.).

"In the kingdom of their Father." The "kingdom" is so constantly used by our Lord to signify His earthly kingdom, or Church, that it is well to note such places as the present, where it signifies the future kingdom of glory.

44. The Hidden Treasure.

It must be noticed that this and the two following parables in this chapter, which are only given by St. Matthew, were not spoken to the multitude, but to the disciples alone in the house.

The 'Hidden Treasure' and the 'Pearls' set forth the priceless value of true religion to the finder of it. Being spoken to those who had already found it, they seem intended to show them how well and wisely they had sacrificed, and would sacrifice, everything to secure this one possession. The chief difference between these two short parables is to be found in the word "seeking" in the second of them (45). The hidden treasure would be found, as we should say, accidentally; at any rate, unexpectedly. The pearl of great price had been carefully sought. Thus the two parables show how differently true religion comes to different persons. To some it comes, by God's mercy, when they are least expecting it. To others it comes as the reward of patient search. To

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43. "*Who hath ears*" &c. See on xi. 15.

A.D. 28. treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and [c] selleth all that he hath, and [d] buyeth that field.

[c] Phil. 3. 7, 8.
[d] Isai. 55. 1. Rev. 3. 18.

45 ¶ Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls:

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all it is of such priceless value that they gladly give up all else to secure it.

"Treasure hid in a field." It was not uncommon in the East to hide treasure under ground, as in more lawless times in our own country. This hidden treasure would be stumbled upon quite unexpectedly. The question is, What does it represent? It has been explained above as 'true religion,' and perhaps it is best to use some such general expression, there being nothing in the parable to narrow the meaning. Still it is very true to say that the hidden treasure and the pearl of great price are Christ Himself, for He is the centre of all true religion, and this meaning fits in exactly with St. Paul's words, which are an excellent commentary on these parables: "I count all things but loss for the "excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I "have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that "I may win Christ, and be found in Him" (Phil. iii. 8, 9).

"He hideth." We need not force this point into any spiritual meaning. It seems brought in simply to show the great anxiety of the finder not to be robbed of his newly found treasure. If it have any spiritual meaning, it would only imply that one truly converted by God's grace would not be hasty to announce to everyone his happiness.

"Buyeth that field." Here again some have tried to press the words into a meaning where possibly none was intended. Thus the field has been explained to mean the Church, and the buying of it the acceptance of all the Church's teaching and ordinances, through which to win Christ. But this is surely far-fetched; and it is better to understand the buying of the field simply as the sacrifice of every thing for the sake of Christ.

It has been well pointed out that the case of the Woman of Samaria is the most striking one we could have of the finding of the hidden treasure.

45, 46. The Pearls.

45. "Seeking goodly pearls." It has been already said that in this lies the difference between this parable and the last. Here we see one carefully seeking what he afterwards finds. As the woman of Samaria is a striking instance of the finding unsought of the hidden treasure, so St. Paul is a striking instance of the reward of a diligent search, for he was striving before his conversion to win God's favour by his mistaken zeal. Timothy too may be named as another instance, for he seems to have found the pearl of great price through diving in the living waters of God's word (See 2 Tim. iii. 15.). So it is still. Some are brought to the discovery of the hidden treasure by unlooked for means, such as a sickness or a sorrow, or words which are brought home to the

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44. "*Like unto treasure.*" On this expression, and on the words "like unto "a merchant man" in the next verse, see *Note* on xi. 16.

46 who, when he had found [e] one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it. A. D. 28.

[e] Prov. 2. 4. & 3. 14, 15. & 8. 10, 19.

47 ¶ Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and [f] gathered of every kind:

[f] ch. 22. 10.

48 which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away.

49 So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and [g] sever the wicked from among the just,

[g] ch. 25. 32.

50 [h] and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

[h] ver. 42.

51 ¶ Jesus saith unto them, Have ye understood all these things? They say unto Him, Yea, Lord.

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heart with life and power by the Spirit of God. Others again make long search after religion, and only after patient toil, and many disappointments, find at last the pearl of great price. Then, whichever way it is found, all is gladly parted with to secure the inestimable treasure.

47—50. The Draw-net.

This parable fitly closes the series of parables in this chapter. We have seen the first planting of the Gospel in the heart: then the external state of the kingdom of Christ in the world; then its growth both in extent and in power; then the priceless value of its treasures to every man who finds them; and now we are to see the end.

47. "Gathered of every kind." That is, every kind of fish, both good and bad. So far this parable repeats that of the 'Tares,' showing that in the visible Church of Christ the evil are ever mingled with the good. But this is not the main point of the parable. The 'Tares' taught the mingling of evil and good in the present kingdom of Christ. The 'Draw-net' teaches their final separation.

48. "When it was full." That is, when the number of the elect is accomplished, when the Church of Christ has gathered of all nations.

49. "The angels shall come forth." We read that Christ shall come with all the holy Angels (See xxv. 31. St. Mark viii. 38. St. Luke ix. 26. 2 Thess. i. 7.). No doubt those holy beings, at present hidden from our eyes, will then "come forth" *visibly* to execute God's judgments.

51, 52. On Christian teaching.

51. "Yea, Lord." The disciples had no doubt understood our Lord's parables so far as they were then capable. Probably however their understanding of them was very imperfect to what it was after they had received the gift of the Holy Ghost.

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49. "*The angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked*" &c. See on 40.

A.D. 28. 52 Then said He unto them, Therefore every scribe *which is* instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man *that is* an householder,
[i] Cant. 7. 13. which bringeth forth out of his treasure [i] *things* new and old.

53 ¶ And it came to pass, *that* when Jesus had finished these parables, He departed thence.

[k] ch. 2. 23. Mark 6. 1. Luke 4. 16, 23. 54 [k] And when He was come into His own country, He taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this
[l] Isai. 49. 7. Mark 6. 3. Luke 3. 23. John 6. 42. *Man* this wisdom, and *these* mighty works?

[m] ch. 12. 46. [n] Mark 15. 40. 55 [l] Is not this the carpenter's Son? is not His mother called Mary? and [m] His brethren, [n] James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?

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52. "Every scribe." As the Scribes were among the Jews the best instructed in the law, so our Lord uses the word of the Christian teacher "instructed unto the kingdom of heaven," that is, instructed so as to be a teacher of the truths of that kingdom.

"Out of his treasure." That is, out of the stores of his learning and experience.

"Things new and old." The "new" would be such things as parables drawn (as our Lord's doubtless were) from the objects before His eyes. The "old" would be the true interpretation and application of the Law and the Prophets.

53—58. The Teaching and rejection of Jesus.

54. "His own country." That is, Nazareth.

55. "The carpenter's Son." So, in His wonderful humility, He, who was Son of God, and had no human father, consented to be known among men.

"His brethren." Who these were has been a subject of much controversy. Two opinions have a claim to consideration:—First, the very

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53. "*He departed thence.*" It has been already stated (See *Note* on x. 5.) that St. Matthew is less careful to give the actual *order* of the events he describes than the other Evangelists. Thus if we turn to St. Mark iv. 35. we find that the stilling of the storm and the visit to the country of the Gadarenes took place *immediately after* the utterance of the parables given in this chapter; so that we are compelled, if we wish to get the right order of events, to go back at this point to viii. 18. and to put in all the events from that verse to ix. 34. between verses 53 and 54 here.

54. "*His own country.*" It is much disputed whether this visit is the same as that recorded in St. Luke iv. 16—29. or not. Probably it is not the same, that recorded by St. Luke appearing to have taken place at an earlier period, shortly after our Lord's Baptism and Temptation (But see *Note* on St. Luke iv. 16.).

55. "*His brethren.*" It would be impossible here to enter into all the arguments concerning the much disputed question of the "brethren" of our Lord. Fortunately the point is not one of practical importance. Those desirous of seeing it most fully and learnedly discussed are recommended to read, as upholding the former of the two opinions above given, the essay on the subject by Dr. Lightfoot in his Commentary upon the Epistle to the Galatians; and, as upholding the latter, the essay by Dr. Mill in the Christian Advocate for 1843.

56 and His sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this *man* all these things? A. D. 28.

57 And they [o] were offended in Him. But Jesus said unto them, [p] A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house. [o] ch. 11. 6. Mark 6. 3, 4. [p] Luke 4. 24. John 4. 44.

58 And [q] He did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief. [q] Mark 6. 5, 6.

CHAPTER XIV.

1 *Herod's opinion of Christ.* 3 *Wherefore John Baptist was beheaded.* 13 *Jesus departeth into a desert place:* 15 *where He feedeth five thousand men with five loaves and two fishes:* 22 *He walketh on the sea to His disciples:* 34 *and landing at Gennesaret, healeth the sick by the touch of the hem of His garment.*

AT that time [a] Herod the tetrarch heard of the fame of Jesus, A. D. 29. beginning. 33rd Year of our Lord's life. [a] Luke 9. 7.

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ancient tradition that they were children of Joseph by a former marriage: Secondly, another ancient opinion that they were children of Alphæus or Cleopas, and cousins only of our Lord.

57. "A prophet is not without honour," &c. These words are a proverb, expressing a common truth. Men constantly think lightly of that with which they are familiar. The blessings at our doors are those we value least. Besides it is a part of the *unbelief*, which so besets us all, to regard only the outward and visible, and to refuse to believe what the eye cannot see. Thus, when a prophet is in any place, men behold his outward life and appearance, and, being accustomed to these, and seeing him in many respects like other men, they are slow to believe in his spiritual office and powers. No doubt another cause of the rejection of Jesus by the Nazarenes was jealousy of any favour shown to One of humble earthly origin.

58. "He did not many mighty works there." St. Mark (though referring probably to a different, and an earlier visit, See vi. 5.) says He *could not* do many mighty works there. So complete a hindrance is unbelief to the reception of God's blessings. "It is His own pathetic "lament in the Psalms that His "kinsmen stood afar off" (Ps. xxxviii. "11.)." (*Is. Williams*).

CHAPTER XIV.

1—12. Herod, and the death of St. John the Baptist.

St. Mark vi. 14—29. St. Luke iii. 19, 20.

1. "Herod the tetrarch." This was Herod Antipas, Son of Herod the Great, who is mentioned in ii. 1. and 19. A "tetrarch" means literally a ruler of a fourth part of a country. The kingdom of Herod the Great

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57. "*Offended.*" See on St. Matth. v. 29. and xvii. 27.

CHAPTER XIV.

1. "*At that time.*" This expression must not be taken as referring to the events related just before (See *Note* on xii. 1.). It seems used in a very wide sense, and may almost mean no more than 'During 'the time of our Lord's public ministry.' Probably it relates to a time *after* the wonderful miracles related in the present chapter, which took place in order immediately upon our Lord's hearing of the burial of St. John the Baptist.

A.D. 29. 2 and said unto his servants, This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead; and therefore
[2] Or, *are wrought by him.* mighty works [2] do shew forth themselves in him.

3 For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound
A.D. 30. him, and put *him* in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife.

[b] Lev. 18. 16. & 20. 21. 4 For John said unto him, [b] It is not lawful for thee to have her.

5 And when he would have put him to death, he
[c] ch. 21. 26. Luke 20. 6. feared the multitude, [c] because they counted him as a prophet.

6 But when Herod's birthday was kept, the
[3] Gr. *in the midst.* daughter of Herodias danced [3] before them, and pleased Herod.

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was divided among his sons, Philip and Antipas (St. Luke iii. 1.) each taking one quarter or 'Tetrarchy,' and Archelaus (St. Matt. ii. 22.) the other two quarters, which included Judæa.

2. **"This is John the Baptist."** A guilty conscience makes a man superstitious, and fills him with silly fears. It seems (from St. Luke ix. 7—9.) that this idea was not Herod's own, but was first suggested by others. It would however be a very horrible idea to the murderer, and would naturally fasten upon his mind, so that he seems here quite to have adopted it as his own. Possibly he uttered his secret dread in the hope that his servants and courtiers would deny it, and so relieve his terrors.

3. **"For Herod had laid hold on John."** St. Matthew here goes back in his history to explain Herod's notion that Christ was John the Baptist risen from the dead.

"For Herodias' sake." In taking Herodias as his wife Herod was guilty of the most gross adultery, for not only was Herodias' husband still alive, but also Herod's own wife, daughter of Aretas an Arabian king, was alive, and was put away for the sake of Herodias. This most wicked act produced a war between Aretas and Herod, in which the latter was defeated with great losses. Besides this, Herodias was niece both to her husband Philip, and to Herod Antipas, being daughter to their brother Aristobulus, so that the whole chain of wickedness began with an act of incest.

4. This is one instance in which John the Baptist displayed the "spirit and power of Elias" (St. Luke i. 17.), rebuking Herod and Herodias, as Elias did Ahab and Jezebel.

5. **"He would have put him to death."** It seems from St. Mark that it was Herodias, rather than Herod, who bore such murderous hatred against the reprover of their wickedness; and we may conclude that, so far as Herod "would have put him to death," it was rather as the weak instrument of a wicked woman's revenge than as himself desiring to commit the deed of blood. We see in the malice of Herodias towards John the Baptist a striking likeness to that of Jezebel towards Elijah.

6. **"The daughter of Herodias."** Her name was Salome.

7 Whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask. A.D. 29.

8 And she, being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger.

9 And the king was sorry: nevertheless for the oath's sake, and them which sat with him at meat, he commanded *it* to be given *her*.

10 And he sent, and beheaded John in the prison.

11 And his head was brought in a charger, and given to the damsel: and she brought *it* to her mother.

12 And his disciples came, and took up the body, and buried it, and went and told Jesus.

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8. "Before instructed of her mother." This does not imply that the whole scheme was arranged beforehand, but only that, when the girl consulted her mother as to what she should ask, Herodias urged and incited her to make the horrible request which was to gratify her own revenge.

"A charger." This is an old word for a large dish.

9. "The king." This title did not properly belong to Herod, and the Roman government afterwards refused it to him, but it was sometimes given to him in common usage. He was "sorry," because, even though he was at one time ready to have put John to death (ver. 5.), still in his better moments he could not help respecting him, and it is probable that for some time he saved him, though by keeping him in prison, from the fiercer hatred of Herodias (See on St. Mark vi. 19, 20.).

"For the oath's sake," &c. Herod was too great a coward to confess himself wrong, and to bear the laughter and taunts of his bad companions. An oath is sacred. However sacred an oath is, Herod's oath could never be binding in the sense Herodias put upon it. It was wrong in him to make so foolish an oath; and it was still more wrong to commit murder in order to fulfil it.

10. "In the prison." This, as we know from the Jewish historian Josephus, was in the fortress of Machærus on the borders of Arabia.

12. "Took up the body." The body of John the Baptist, we are told by Josephus, was cast out of the prison without burial.

"Went and told Jesus." Perhaps the loss of their former teacher became to these disciples of John a gain, in that it brought them as disciples to Him, for whom they had been taught to prepare a way in their hearts.

It is impossible to close the account of the martyrdom of St. John the Baptist without quoting the most beautiful prayer which is given us by our Church in the Collect for St. John the Baptist's Day: "Make us so "to follow his doctrine and holy life, that we may truly repent according "to his preaching; and after his example constantly speak the truth, "boldly rebuke vice, and patiently suffer for the truth's sake."

A. D. 29.

[e] ch. 10. 23. & 12. 15.

13 ¶ [e] When Jesus heard *of it*, He departed thence by ship into a desert place apart: and when the people had heard *thereof*, they followed Him on foot out of the cities.

[f] ch. 9. 36.

14 And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and [f] was moved with compassion toward them, and He healed their sick.

15 And when it was evening, His disciples came to Him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals.

13—21. The Feeding of the five thousand.

St. Mark vi. 30—44. St. Luke ix. 10—17. St. John vi. 1—13.

This miracle is recorded, and the only one recorded, by all the four Evangelists. It must therefore be of singular importance. The different accounts should be read together, and it can never be studied properly apart from the wonderful discourse which follows it in St. John vi.

13. "When Jesus heard of it." It appears from these words that grief for the loss of His friend and cousin may have been one cause for our Lord's wish to retire to a secret place; although from the words of the other Gospels we gather that another cause was that the Apostles, who had just returned from their first mission, might share in His retirement, possibly in order that He might converse with them undisturbed.

"On foot." The scene of the miracle being on the Eastern side of the sea of Galilee, that is, on the opposite side from Capernaum (See *Note* on xi. 21.), while Jesus crossed the lake in a ship, the people went by land round the Northern shore, crossing the Jordan above the lake.

14. "Jesus went forth." That is, probably, from the boat.

15. "When it was evening." It is strange to find the same expression as to the hour used both here and in verse 23, after the miracle was over and our Lord had retired into a mountain to pray; but it seems that the Jews divided the evening into a first and a second part, answering to our afternoon and evening, and the word must be taken in the former sense the first time and in the latter sense the second time.

"The time is now past." That is, the hour is late.

15. "*When it was evening.*" The occurrence of the same expression both here and in 23 may help to soften many of the little difficulties which are sometimes felt as to the differences in the different Gospels. Had verse 23 occurred in *another* Gospel, and not in this, how certainly would the enemies of the Bible have picked out this seeming difference as to the time as a *difficulty*. So too we can hardly doubt that, had this miracle and that of the Feeding of the four thousand been recorded only in *different* Gospels, they would have been declared by many to be only different accounts of the same miracle, and have been used as an argument against the perfect truth of God's word.

It will be observed that in this verse the disciples appear to raise the difficulty as to providing for so great a multitude. In St. John's Gospel the subject seems first mentioned by our Lord in His question to Philip. It is easy to see that, if we had before us every least particular of the history, we should find both accounts agreeing perfectly with the facts, even though, with the few short details we possess, it may be hard to trace out their exact order.

16 But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them to eat. A.D. 29.

17 And they say unto Him, We have here but five loaves, and two fishes.

18 He said, Bring them hither to Me.

19 And He commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, [g] He blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to *His* disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. [g] ch. 15. 36.

20 And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full.

21 And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, beside women and children.

22 ¶ And straightway Jesus constrained His disciples to get into a ship, and to go before Him unto the other side, while He sent the multitudes away.

23 And when He had sent the multitudes away,

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19. "Blessed." St. John has "gave thanks" here. It was by giving thanks that Jesus blessed the food.

"Brake, and gave." At what moment the actual increase of the loaves took place we are not told, nor need we curiously enquire. This wonderful miracle is of the same *kind* as that of Elijah, when the widow's barrel of meal and cruse of oil failed not (1 Kings xvii. 16.), and that of Elisha, when he fed a hundred men with twenty barley loaves and some ears of corn (2 Kings iv. 44.). Only our Lord's miracle is greater in *degree*. We must beware of the not uncommon error of commenting upon this miracle as though it were such a special display of creative power as none but the Creator, Himself manifest in the flesh, could show forth, for we have seen that similar miracles were performed by Elijah and Elisha. It is quite right however to say that *they* performed them by the power of God bestowed on them from without. *Christ* performed His by the Divine power residing in Himself.

22—36. The Walking on the Sea, and the Visit to Gennesaret.

St. Mark vi. 45—56. St. John vi. 16—21.

22. "Jesus constrained His disciples to get into a ship." Our Lord may have done this in order the more easily to retire for prayer, and with a view to the miracle He was about to perform. But possibly another reason may be found in St. John's statement that the people wished to take Him by force and make Him a king, which the disciples may have been too willing to see done.

A.D. 29. He went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, He was there alone.

24 But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary.

25 And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.

h Job 9. 8. 26 And when the disciples saw Him [h] walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear.

27 But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.

28 And Peter answered Him and said, Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come unto Thee on the water.

29 And He said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.

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23. "He went up into a mountain to pray." Jesus seeks, not rest, but prayer. How well does He thus show forth to us the necessity of blending secret devotion with active work in God's service. If we would do God's will on earth as Jesus did it, and as the holy Angels in Heaven do it, it must be by the union of acts of love towards man with acts of adoration towards God.

24. "In the midst of the sea." "They had rowed about five and "twenty or thirty furlongs" (St. John), that is, between three and four miles. The lake is about six miles broad.

25. "The fourth watch." The night between six in the evening and six in the morning being divided into four watches of three hours each, this would be between three and six in the morning. The term 'watch' is a military term, being the length of time the Roman soldiers watched between the hours of relieving guard.

26. "Troubled." Jesus often comes to us in some strange form or manner, and we are troubled. Could we only recognize His presence, how would our fears cease; for He comes only to save and to bless.

28. "If it be Thou." The account of St. Peter's walking on the water is given only by St. Matthew. We must not suppose the Apostle to wish to put to the proof the reality of Christ's appearance, as though he could not believe it was He except on the evidence of a new miracle. These words rather mean, '*Since* it is Thou.' How thoroughly is St. Peter's request in accordance with his character. He is always the bold, the ready, the forward, sometimes even to rashness. His conduct on this occasion is a foreshadowing of his "greater presumption and greater "fall."

29. "He walked on the water." As Christ's power here overruled the laws of nature, and enabled the human body of St. Peter to walk upon the water, so will His power yet more wonderfully change our vile bodies, and the laws of our nature, so that we shall be able to pass with lightning speed through the boundless fields of space, and ascend as He ascended, to the mansions of God's heavenly house.

30 But when he saw the wind [2] boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. A.D. 29.

[2] Or, *strong.*

31 And immediately Jesus stretched forth *His* hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

32 And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased.

33 Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped Him, saying, Of a truth [i] Thou art the Son of God.

[i] Ps. 2. 7. ch. 16. 16. & 26. 63. Mark 1. 1. Luke 4. 41. John 1. 49. & 6. 69. & 11. 27. Acts 8. 37. Rom. 1. 4.

34 And when they were gone over, they came into the land of Gennesaret.

35 And when the men of that place had knowledge of Him, they sent out into all that country round about, and brought unto Him all that were diseased;

36 and besought Him that they might only touch the hem of His garment: and [k] as many as touched were made perfectly whole.

[k] ch. 9. 20. Mark 3. 10. Luke 6. 19. Acts 19. 12.

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30. "He was afraid." He ought to have been sure that with Jesus by his side he was safe. But his faith failed him, and immediately the power given him was withdrawn. It is the same with those who are passing through the waves and storms of life. So long as they retain their faith in Christ's presence and protection, they are safe. When once that fails them, they begin to sink. Well is it for those who, ere they are quite overwhelmed in the waters, utter the heartfelt cry, "Lord, save "me." He will then immediately stretch forth His hand, and rescue them from their peril.

31. "Wherefore didst thou doubt?" It has been well said that Christ's words are not 'Wherefore didst thou *come?*' The Apostle was right in stepping on the water, for Christ had said "Come." Wherever He invites or commands us to go, there it is plain we should not hesitate to go. It is want of faith, making us fear when we are following His commands, and when He is near us, which Jesus rebukes.

32. "The wind ceased." St. John adds another miracle: "Immedi-"ately the ship was at the land whither they went."

33. "They that were in the ship." These would be the crew, and possibly other passengers, besides the disciples.

34. "Gennesaret." This was a beautiful and fertile tract of land at the North-west corner of the Sea of Galilee, which was often called from it the Lake of Gennesaret. Capernaum stood in this district, which explains the fact that St. John speaks of the disciples going toward "Capernaum," in describing the same voyage as this to "the land of "Gennesaret."

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36. "*The hem of His garment.*" See on St. Mark v. 27, 28.

A.D. 29.

CHAPTER XV.

3 Christ reproveth the scribes and Pharisees for transgressing God's commandments through their own traditions: 11 teacheth how that which goeth into the mouth doth not defile a man. 21 He healeth the daughter of the woman of Canaan, 30 and other great multitudes: 32 and with seven loaves and a few little fishes feedeth four thousand men, beside women and children.

THEN came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying,

[a] Col. 2. 8.

2 Why do Thy disciples transgress [a] the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread.

3 But He answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?

[b] Lev. 19. 3. Deut. 5. 16. Prov. 23. 22. Eph. 6. 2. [c] Lev. 20. 9. Deut. 27. 16. Prov. 20. 20. & 30. 17.

4 For God commanded, saying, [b] **Honour thy father and mother:** and, [c] **He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death.**

Exodus 20. 12. & 21. 17.

5 But ye say, Whosoever shall say to *his* father or *his* mother, *It is* a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me;

CHAPTER XV.

1—9. Eating with unwashen hands, and the Fifth Commandment.

St. Mark vii. 1—13.

1. "**Of Jerusalem.**" We should naturally expect, as indeed we find the case, that Jewish customs and traditions are most strongly defended in the capital city. Even the early Christian Church was not free from this influence (See Gal. ii. 12.).

2. "**The tradition of the elders.**" A "tradition" is a doctrine handed down by word of mouth only, and not put into writing. The Jews valued their traditions even more than the word of God. The "elders" in this place probably means those of olden times. St. Matthew, writing for Jews, does not give any explanation of a tradition which would be familiar to his readers. St. Mark gives an account of the various Jewish traditions as to washing.

3. "**Why do ye also**" &c. Our Lord in His divine wisdom answers one question by another, showing that, if His disciples broke the traditions of men, the Jews broke the plain command of God by those very traditions; which at once condemned them as evil.

4. "**Honour.**" There is more in this word than the mere idea of respect and obedience. It certainly implies support and succour, so that our Catechism is right in explaining it as to "love, honour, and *succour* "my father and mother," &c.

5. "**It is a gift.**" That is, a gift to God. The tradition was that any man might dedicate his substance to God, and so say to his parents, 'What 'I might have given to you has been set apart as a gift to God,' and that

6 and honour not his father or his mother, *he shall be free.* Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition. A.D. 29.

7 *Ye* hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying,

8 [d] **This people draweth nigh unto Me with their mouth, and honoureth Me with *their* lips; but their heart is far from Me.** [d] Ezek. 33. 31.

9 **But in vain they do worship Me, [e] teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men.** [e] Col. 2. 18, —22. Titus 1. 14. Isaiah 29. 13.

10 ¶ And He called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand: [f] Acts 10. 15. Rom. 14. 14, 17. 20. 1 Tim. 4. 4. Titus 1. 15.

11 [f] Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth

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in such case he would be free from the duty of supporting his parents. It seems too that even then the son was not obliged to give the gift to holy uses, the mere going through the form of dedicating it being held sufficient.

6. "**Thus have ye made**" &c. This is a very important verse, as showing the supreme authority of the plain word of God. Human tradition is continually making God's commandment of none effect, and is therefore to be jealously watched and restrained. In one place it does so by inventing new doctrines, in another by enforcing new practices; here by setting up as with authority human interpretations of God's word, there by pressing certain truths into such undue importance as to hide other truths no less important. In all cases Christ would teach us to find safety from such dangers in the simple acceptance of God's word. And in full accordance with this our Church teaches us, in the 6th Article, that "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so "that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not "to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of "the Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation."

9. "**In vain they do worship Me,**" &c. They who pretend to honour God, but yet dishonour His word by preferring to it the doctrines and commandments of men, worship God in vain. They are hypocrites, professing what they do not feel or act up to, for if they really honoured God, they would certainly honour His word too.

10—20. Defilement.

St. Mark vii. 14—23.

10. "**The multitude.**" Because they were more open to reason and to conviction than the self-righteous Pharisees.

11. "**That which goeth into the mouth.**" Probably our Lord refers

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6. "*He shall be free.*" These words, as may be seen by their being printed in Italics, or small type, in our English Bibles, are not in the original, but they give what is plainly the meaning; although perhaps they would have come in better at the end of the verse before, the whole passage running thus: 'But ye 'say, Whosoever shall say to his father 'or his mother, It is a gift, namely, that 'by which thou mightest be profited by 'me, *he shall be free.* And he will honour 'not his father or his mother. Thus' &c.

7. "*Hypocrites.*" See on vi. 2.

A. D. 29. a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man.

12 Then came His disciples, and said unto Him, Knowest Thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying?

g John 15. 2. 1 Cor. 3. 12, &c. 13 But He answered and said, g Every plant, which My heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.

h Isai. 9. 16. Mal. 2. 8. ch. 23. 16. Luke 6. 39. 14 Let them alone: h they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.

15 Then answered Peter and said unto Him, Declare unto us this parable.

i ch. 16. 9. 16 And Jesus said, i Are ye also yet without understanding?

k 1 Cor. 6. 13. 17 Do not ye yet understand, that k whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught?

l James 3. 6. 18 But l those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man.

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principally to bread eaten with unwashen hands, since that had been the subject of the Pharisees' complaint. But His words would certainly bear a wider meaning, and would pave the way for the abolishing of the old distinction between clean and unclean food, which, with other like ceremonial laws, was to preserve the Jews as a separate people, until God's chosen nation was no longer of one race or country, but the elect and Catholic (or universal) Church of the Redeemer.

13. **"Every plant."** This may be understood in two senses, 1. It may be spoken of the Pharisees, who would thus be compared to the tares in the field, which shall be rooted up when the day of separation shall come. Or 2. It may be spoken of the *doctrines* of the Pharisees, the "traditions" and "commandments of men." The latter is the view of most commentators.

14. **"Let them alone."** That is, 'Heed them not.' Their offence at the truth is no more to be regarded than their untrue teaching.

"Both shall fall into the ditch." The Pharisees and their disciples —the leaders and the led—both should perish in their blindness. Yet we cannot doubt that the former will be the more severely punished by the all-just God, for "unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be "much required" (St. Luke xii. 48.).

15. **"This parable."** St. Peter meant the saying in verse 11. This is not a parable in the strict sense, but a simple truth. The Apostles however plainly did not understand it, and either supposed it was a short parable, or else used the word in a wide sense for a hard saying.

18. **"From the heart."** The great principle that words are good or evil according as the heart is good or evil had been stated by our Lord before, when He said, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth

19 [m] For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: A.D. 29.

[m] Gen. 6. 5. & 8. 21. Prov. 6. 14. Jer. 17. 9.

20 these are *the things* which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.

21 ¶ Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon.

22 And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto Him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, *Thou* son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.

23 But He answered her not a word. And His

"speaketh" (xii. 34.). In this place He is declaring the truth of that principle *on one side*, namely on the side of *evil*. That which comes from an evil heart must be evil, and must therefore "defile a man."

21—28. The Syro-Phœnician Woman.

St. Mark vii. 24—30.

21. "The coasts of Tyre and Sidon." "Coasts" means 'borders.' Our Lord probably did not pass over the boundary of Galilee, but only went to the borders. If He had gone out of the Jewish land, He could hardly have used the words, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of "the house of Israel" (24.). Moreover the woman is said (22.) to have *come out of* the same coasts (But see on 29.).

22. "A woman of Canaan." This woman was probably of the race of the ancient Canaanites, who inhabited the land before the conquest by Joshua, and some of whom were, contrary to God's command, suffered to remain. In St. Mark's Gospel she is called a "Syrophœnician" from the place of her abode.

"Son of David." The woman had doubtless learnt from others to call our Lord by this title. How far she was herself instructed in the Jewish Scriptures, or had any previous knowledge of a Messiah, we are not told. Though a Gentile, yet we can hardly think she was still a heathen. Even if she were not a proselyte (that is, a convert to the Jewish faith), she must have learnt something of the true God, and of the great Prophet whom He had sent into the world, and to whom she now resolved in her distress to go.

"My daughter." It is not for herself alone that she pleads, though neither is it for her daughter alone. The mercy she asks is for both. Still her prayer is mainly an intercession, for her daughter's recovery is the mercy uppermost in her mind. So we see in this history an example of *intercessory* prayer prevailing.

23. "He answered her not a word." Why did Jesus thus try this poor woman? It was not His habit to act in this way. No: He would display to all present, yea, and to all the world, the strength and depth of her faith. He would teach the Jew that not among the children of

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19. "*Evil thoughts*," *&c.* The list of sins is given so much more fully in St. Mark, that any remarks upon them will be better kept for that place.

21. "*Tyre and Sidon.*" See on xi. 21.

A.D. 29. disciples came and besought Him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us.

[n] ch. 10. 5, 6. Acts 3. 25, 26. & 13. 46. Rom. 15. 8.

24 But He answered and said, [n] I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

25 Then came she and worshipped Him, saying, Lord, help me.

26 But He answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast *it* to [o] dogs.

[o] ch. 7. 6. Phil. 3. 2.

27 And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.

Abraham alone was the faith of Abraham to be found, and that not for them alone were God's mercies in store.

"Send her away;" &c. Our Lord's answer shows that this was a request that Jesus would grant her prayer, and so send her away. Man pities, while the Son of God seems pitiless! Yet man's pity was selfish, for it was to stop her crying after them that the disciples pleaded for her: the seeming harshness of the Son of God was all love, for it was to magnify the coming blessing.

24. "I am not sent" &c. How was this true? All prophecy had foretold that in Christ *all the nations of the earth* should be blessed. He was declared by Simeon to be "a Light to lighten *the Gentiles*" as well as to be the glory of God's people Israel (St. Luke ii. 32.). He Himself declared, by plain speech and by parable, the gathering in of the Gentiles. By His acts, as here and in His dealings with the Samaritans, He showed His willingness to open His fountain of blessings to others besides the Jews. How then was this true? Plainly in respect of His *Personal* ministry and mission. He was not sent to visit *in person* others than "His "own" people. God's scheme of mercy was to be offered *first* to the Jew. This answer is made to the disciples, but was probably overheard by the woman.

26. "It is not meet" &c. To the first request the answer is silence: to the second a seemingly stern refusal. If there are some who would have persevered thus far, are there any who would not after this have gone away in anger or in despair? The "children" here are the Jews —"the children of the kingdom" (viii. 12. *but not* xiii. 38.): the "dogs" are the Gentiles, so called by the Jews in contempt. Our Lord means, It is not fit to take the blessings meant for the Jews and to give them to the Gentiles. But His manner of saying it would have driven away most. He knew it would not drive *her* away, or He would not have used the words.

"Truth, Lord." What faith, what humility, what perseverance in prayer, is here! She believes that mercy is hidden behind the outward harshness: she takes no offence at words which might have wounded: she faints not in her praying. Nay; she seizes on the very form of the refusal to turn it into a new petition. Like Jacob with the angel, she wrestles, as it were, with Christ in her earnestness of prayer, and will

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27. "*Yet the dogs.*" This would be more exactly translated by the words '*for even* the dogs'; the "Truth, Lord," not being an acceptance of the whole of our Lord's sentence, but rather of the last word in it—"dogs." See Trench's version of the answer, as given above.

28 Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great *is* thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour. A.D. 29.

29 ¶ [p] And Jesus departed from thence, and came nigh [q] unto the sea of Galilee; and went up into a mountain, and sat down there. [p] Mark 7. 31. [q] ch. 4. 18.

30 [r] And great multitudes came unto Him, having with them *those that were* lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and He healed them: [r] Isai. 35. 5, 6. ch. 11. 5. Luke 7. 22.

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not let Him go till He blesses her. And He has now put the weapon into her hand with which she is to overcome Him. Her answer may be put more fully thus: "Saidst Thou '*dogs*'? It is well; I accept the title, "and the place: for the dogs have a portion of the meal—not the first— "not the children's portion, but a portion still,—the crumbs which fall "from the table" (*Trench.*).

28. "O woman, great is thy faith:" &c. She has conquered, and this poor Canaanitish mother stands for ever as the great example of the blessedness of persevering prayer. Surely Jesus might have said of her, as He did of the centurion (viii. 10.), that He had not found so great faith, no not in Israel. And now that faith is rewarded, and "He, who at first seemed as though He would have denied her the "smallest boon, now opens to her the full treasure-house of His grace, "and bids her to help herself, to carry away what she will" (*Trench.*). It is as though He could deny nothing to such a faith.

29—39. Feeding of the Four Thousand.

St. Mark viii. 1—10; and compare on the Feeding of the Five Thousand, St. John vi. 1—14.

29. "Jesus departed" &c. We know from St. Mark (vii. 31.) that Jesus approached the Sea of Galilee through Decapolis, a district lying Eastward of the Jordan (See *Note* on iv. 25.), so that this mountain would also be on the Eastern shore of the Lake. This would agree with the last verse of this chapter, in which we read of His crossing the sea to Magdala, which lay on the Western side. Thus the scene of the following miracles was in the same neighbourhood with that of the feeding of the five thousand. It is worthy of notice that our Lord at this time, which is early in the third year of His public ministry (See on St. John v. 1.), seems to be keeping as far as possible from the places where His bitter enemies would be most found. He is found at various places on the very outskirts of the Holy Land,—places where the population would be in a great measure Gentile, and where much darkness and ignorance would probably be found. Thus *from* the "coasts of Tyre "and Sidon" (See on 2.) He passes through Decapolis to the Eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee, and, though His journey is not related, we find Him immediately afterwards at Cæsarea Philippi (xvi. 13.).

30. "He healed them." St. Mark relates one of these miracles of healing very fully (vii. 32—37.), but makes no mention of the rest.

A.D. 29. 31 insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and they glorified the God of Israel.

32 Then Jesus called His disciples *unto Him*, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with Me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way.

o 2 Kin. 4. 43. 33 °And His disciples say unto Him, Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness, as to fill so great a multitude?

34 And Jesus saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven, and a few little fishes.

35 And He commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground.

P ch. 14. 19. 36 And PHe took the seven loaves and the fishes,

q 1 Sam. 9. 13. Luke 22. 19. and q gave thanks, and brake *them*, and gave to His disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.

37 And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken *meat* that was left seven baskets full.

38 And they that did eat were four thousand men, beside women and children.

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33. "Whence should we have so much bread" &c. It has been thought by some very strange that so soon after the former miracle of feeding the five thousand the disciples should ask such a question as this. But we must observe, first, that there is nothing in this question to show that they did not hope to see the former miracle repeated, even though it would have seemed presuming in them to suggest it: secondly, that, even if they did not expect a second miracle of the same sort, it was not so strange in them, seeing, as they did, crowds coming to Christ day after day, as it seems to us when we read the two miracles in two successive chapters.

37. "Baskets." It is a curious and interesting fact that in both accounts of this miracle, that here and that in St. Mark, the original word for basket is a different one from that used in all four accounts of the other miracle, and signifies a different and larger sort of basket. It is the same word which is used for the basket in which St. Paul was let down from the wall of Damascus (Acts ix. 25.). In the next chapter (xvi. 9, 10.) our Lord preserves the same distinction of words, when speaking of the two miracles.

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34. "*How many loaves have ye?*" On our Lord's asking this and other such questions see on St. Luke viii. 46.

39 [r]And He sent away the multitude, and took ship, and came into the coasts of Magdala. A.D. 29. r Mark 8. 10.

CHAPTER XVI.

1 *The Pharisees require a sign.* 6 *Jesus warneth His disciples of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.* 13 *The people's opinion of Christ,* 16 *and Peter's confession of Him.* 21 *Jesus foresheweth His death,* 23 *reproving Peter for dissuading Him from it:* 24 *and admonisheth those that will follow Him, to bear the cross.*

THE [a]Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, and tempting desired Him that He would shew them a sign from heaven. a Luke 11. 16. & 12. 54,—56. 1 Cor. 1. 22.

2 He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, *It will be* fair weather: for the sky is red.

3 And in the morning, *It will be* foul weather to day: for the sky is red and lowring. O *ye* hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not *discern* the signs of the times?

4 A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto

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39. "Magdala." Probably the village from which Mary Magdalene takes her name, and on the West side of the Sea of Galilee.

CHAPTER XVI.

1—4. The Pharisees and the Sadducees ask for a sign from heaven.

St. Mark viii. 11—13.

1. "The Pharisees also with the Sadducees." This passage must be compared with the former similar one (See on xii. 38—42.), in which the *Scribes* and Pharisees sought for a sign. Here we behold a new friendship. The Pharisees and the Sadducees, bitterest opponents as they were (See on iii. 7. and Acts xxiii. 6, 7.), unite together to oppose Christ. So do we often see unprincipled men of most opposite views and opinions banded together in their enmity to religion. Observe how St. Paul refers to the frequent demanding of a sign from our Lord, saying, "The Jews "require a sign" (1 Cor. i. 22.).

3. "The signs of the times." These were abundantly clear to those who could read them candidly and without prejudice. To us it seems strange that a Jew could read the prophets and yet not see how strikingly prophecy was at that time being fulfilled.

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39. "*Magdala.*" This village seems to have stood close to Dalmanutha, which is given by St. Mark, and the two names are to be accounted for in the same way as in the case of the Gergesenes and Gadarenes (See *Note* on St Matt. viii. 28.). It should be stated that the best old copies of St. Matthew have Magadan here in place of Magdala, but, if Magadan is the correct reading, it was doubtless a village in the same neighbourhood.

A.D. 29. it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. And He left them, and departed.

5 ¶ And when His disciples were come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread.

b Luke 12. 1. 6 Then Jesus said unto them, [b] Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.

7 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, *It is* because we have taken no bread.

8 *Which* when Jesus perceived, He said unto

5—12. Warning against the Pharisees and the Sadducees.

St. Mark viii. 14—21.

5. "The other side." This must have been the Eastern side of the Lake (See St. Mark viii. 13.), the very neighbourhood of the two wonderful miracles of feeding the five thousand and the four thousand. It seems as though our Lord were visiting that side of the Lake frequently just at this time (See on xv. 29.). Possibly, though a wild and thinly-peopled district, it contained some in whom He had a special interest, and for whose sake He thus visited it thrice within a short space of time, but doubtless also it was a district where He would be more free from the persecution of His Jewish enemies.

6. "The leaven." We have here an instance in which Jesus draws His teaching from the circumstances present to Him. This may suggest His usual practice, and lead us to suppose that He may have frequently drawn His parables or sayings from the scenes in which He was (See on xiii. 1.). In this case the disciples had only one loaf with them (St. Mark), having forgotten to take a supply, and from the fact that this is in both Gospels mentioned *before* our Lord's warning as to "the "leaven" we may gather that some mention was made of the shortness of the supply, from which He took occasion to deliver His warning. Leaven is used as an image both in a good and in a bad sense, though far the most often in a bad (See on xiii. 33.). It is a fitting likeness of any influence which works and spreads in the hearts of men.

7. "It is because we have taken no bread." How slow the disciples were to understand the spirituality of their Master's teaching! We cannot wonder at the woman of Samaria mistaking concerning the living water (St. John iv. 11.), but here we should have expected a deeper insight into spiritual things. The disciples imagined our Lord would scruple to eat bread prepared by either Pharisees or Sadducees, as though it would pollute and defile. How little could they have entered into the truth so lately taught them, that "not that which goeth into "the mouth defileth a man" (xv. 11.).

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6. "*The Sadducees.*" St. Mark in the parallel passage has "Herod" in place of the Sadducees. Herod's supporters were chiefly of the Sadducees, and worldly and unbelieving. Thus the difference in the meaning is very slight. Probably the very short accounts of this conversation are only portions of a much longer discourse, during which our Lord may have spoken of the Sadducees and the Herodians as alike in their "leaven."

them, O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread? A.D. 29.

9 [c] Do ye not yet understand, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? [c] ch. 14. 17. John 6. 9.

10 [d] Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? [d] ch. 15. 31.

11 How is it that ye do not understand that I spake *it* not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees?

12 Then understood they how that He bade *them* not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.

13 ¶ When Jesus came into the coasts of Cæsarea

8. "**O ye of little faith.**" Faith is the eye of the soul, the eye which looks upon "the things which are not seen." In St. Paul's words, it is "the evidence of things not seen," that which makes them as clear and true to us, as the bodily eye makes the things of sight. It was exactly such a spiritual eye which the disciples lacked, when they thought their Master spoke of *outward* leaven and *outward* bread. This was *sight*, not faith. Therefore the rebuke. No one can help being struck by the faithfulness with which the Evangelists continually record the weaknesses and falls of the disciples, and the reproofs of our Lord. This faithfulness has been well brought forward as a proof of the truthfulness of the history, as well as of the humility of the historian.

9. "**The five loaves.**" Jesus reminds His disciples of these two miracles to show them how little they need have been anxious about the amount of their provision (See on xv. 33.).

12. "**Doctrine.**" There seems no need to interpret this of "hypocrisy," though this is, on another occasion (St. Luke xii. 1.), declared to be the "leaven of the Pharisees." Indeed "hypocrisy" is not a "*doctrine*" at all. The doctrine of the Pharisees was a self-righteous strictness of conduct, and a hypocritical care for outward observances. The doctrine of the Sadducees was a want of belief in all that they could not plainly see,—unbelief leading to a worldly life.

13—20. Confession, and Blessing of St. Peter.

St. Mark viii. 27—30. St. Luke ix. 18—21.

13. "**Cæsarea Philippi.**" This is not the Cæsarea mentioned so frequently in the Acts of the Apostles, which was on the sea-coast. This place was situated inland, on the North-east of the Holy Land, in a beautiful valley, just under Mount Hermon. It is by some thought to be the same as the ancient Laish or Dan. It was near one of the sources of the Jordan, and about thirty miles northward from the Sea of Galilee. Philip the tetrarch (See on xiv. 1.) enlarged and beautified the city, and gave it the name Cæsarea Philippi, after his master the Roman emperor, and himself.

9. "*Baskets.*" See on xv. 37.

A. D. 29. Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, [e] Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?

e ch. 22. 42.

14 And they said, [f] Some *say that Thou art* John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.

f ch. 14. 2. Luke 9. 7, 8, 9.

15 He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?

g ch. 14. 33. John 6. 69. & 11. 27. Acts 8. 37. & 9. 20. Heb. 1. 2, 5. 1 John 4. 15. & 5. 5.

16 And Simon Peter answered and said, [g] Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: [h] for flesh and blood hath not revealed *it* unto thee, but [i] My Father which is in heaven.

h Eph. 2. 8.
i 1 Cor. 2. 10. Gal. 1. 16.

18 And I say also unto thee, That [k] thou art Peter, and [l] upon this rock I will build My church; and [m] the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

k John 1. 42.
l Eph. 2. 20. Rev. 21. 14.
m Job 38. 17. Ps. 9. 13. & 107. 18. Isai. 38. 10.

"Whom do men say" &c. This question was to prepare for the next one, and to draw out the difference between what the people commonly said of Jesus, and what His chosen Apostles believed about Him.

14. "Jeremias, or one of the prophets." Probably the idea that Jesus was the prophet Jeremiah, which is only named in this place, rested on some Jewish tradition unknown to us. Under the expression "one of "the prophets" may possibly be included *the* Prophet, of whom Moses prophesied (Deut. xviii. 15.) as like unto himself.

16. "Simon Peter." Always the first in every list of the Apostles (See on x. 2.), and acting as leader or spokesman for the rest.

"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." This wonderful confession declares our Lord's office as well as His nature. "Thou art "the Christ," that is, the Anointed, Divinely consecrated to be the Prophet Priest and King of Thy people: and Thou art "the Son of the "living God," that is, no mere man, but partaker, in the highest sense, of the Divine Nature, true Son of God, and therefore truly God.

17. "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee," &c. That is mere human reason—"flesh and blood" being put for our unassisted human nature. (In 1 Cor. xv. 50, where it is said that "flesh and blood "cannot inherit the kingdom of God," it is put for our unchanged and unspiritualized human nature.) Compare with our Lord's words St. Paul's remarkable saying, that "no man can say that Jesus is the "Lord, but by the Holy Ghost" (1 Cor. xii. 3.).

18. "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock" &c. The name Peter, signifying Rock or Stone, had been given to Simon the first time our Lord met him (St. John i. 42.). It was given him probably on account of his natural boldness of character. Our Lord here makes use of the

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14. "*John the Baptist.*" See on xiv. 2. "Elias." See on xi. 14.

17. "*Bar-jona.*" That is, 'Son of Jona.' 'Bar' at the beginning of Hebrew names signifies 'Son of'; as in Bar-nabas, Son of consolation. Bar-sabas, Son of rest.

18. "*Upon this rock.*" It is perhaps right to state that other interpretations have been given to these words, besides that given above. The chief of these are 1. that the Rock means Christ Himself; and 2. that it means the confession which

19 [n] And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt A.D. 29. [n] ch. 18. 18. John 20. 23.

name in pronouncing a blessing on St. Peter for his noble confession of Him. It is as though He said, 'Thou art called the 'Rock,' and fitly 'dost thou bear the name, for upon this Rock I will build My Church.' How fully this promise was fulfilled we may see in the history of the conversion of the first large number of Jews, when three thousand souls were brought into the Church on the Day of Pentecost by the preaching of St. Peter (Acts ii. 41.), and in the history of the conversion of the first Gentile household, that of Cornelius, by the same Apostle (Acts x.). It is strange that any should venture (as Roman Catholic writers do) to draw from this verse a proof of St. Peter's *supremacy* over the rest of the Apostles, and still more that they should go on from that to claim the same supremacy for those whom they call his successors. It is surely plain that the same blessing, although called forth by St. Peter's confession, and fitting so well with his name, and fulfilled so remarkably in him, might have been spoken of any other of the Apostles; for the Church of Christ is (next after the *one* Foundation-stone, namely Himself,), "built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets" (Eph. ii. 20.). They are all chosen *stones* in the foundation of the Church. "The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names "of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb" (Rev. xxi. 14.). We need not fear to allow to St. Peter the foremost place among the twelve (See on x. 2.), but that can give no standing-room for the claims of Rome. "The "Apostles were in truth what Peter was, entitled with him to an equal "share of dignity and power" (*St. Cyprian.*).

"My church." This is the first time the word 'Church' is used in the New Testament. It only occurs once more in the Gospels (namely in xviii. 17.), but it is a common word in the Acts of the Apostles and in the Epistles. This is natural, because the Church could scarcely be said to exist before the Day of Pentecost. By the 'Church' is meant the Company or Society of believers. The Greek word translated 'church' in our Bible means literally 'called out,' and may thus remind us that Christ's Church consists of those called out of the world, elected by God, and baptized into the body of Christians. This spiritual society is often compared to a building (See Eph. ii. 20—22. 1 St. Peter ii. 4, 5.), as by our Lord here. The word 'Church' is never used in holy Scripture, as it is so commonly by us, for the visible building set apart for God's service, unless *perhaps* in 1 Cor. xi. 18, 22.

"The gates of hell shall not prevail against it." 'Hell' here means death or destruction. The Greek word is 'Hades,' and is used in a somewhat different sense from the more ordinary (See on xi. 23. and St. Luke xvi. 23.). The expression signifies that nothing should prevail to destroy the Church of Christ. Even he "that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Heb. ii. 14.), would expend all his crafts and assaults upon it in vain.

19. "The keys of the kingdom of heaven." The "kingdom of

St. Peter had just made. These are both supported by high authority, though it is difficult, if either of them be true, to account for the words, "Thou art Peter." Were these three words left out, either of these interpretations would be natural and easy; but, as they stand, how can they be accounted for except as spoken for the purpose of making use of the word 'Peter' with a sort of play upon its meaning (if we may venture so to speak)? If we had in English similar words for the *name* and the *rock*, as in the original, we could scarcely help taking the sentence in the simple and natural sense given above. If it were written, 'Thou

A.D. 29. bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

"heaven" is simply the usual way in which our Lord speaks of His Church on earth (See on iii. 2.). What then are the "keys"? They seem, in their more general sense, to be the badge of authority, the token that to those holding them is committed the government of the Church under Christ. But, in a more special sense, they certainly must imply the power of opening and shutting. They are evidently a badge and token of authority in opening and shutting. But opening and shutting what? Either 1. The doors of the "kingdom of heaven" itself: or 2. the doors of the treasures and blessings of that kingdom: or 3. both these. We accept the 3rd meaning. For certainly St. Peter did open the doors of the kingdom itself to the three thousand Jewish converts on the Day of Pentecost, and to the household of Cornelius, the firstfruits of the Gentiles. And he equally shut those doors in the case of Simon the sorcerer (Acts viii.). Then, in the second sense, of course St. Peter, as an Apostle, was a "steward "of the mysteries of God" (1 Cor. iv. 1.), and dispensed the treasures and blessings of the kingdom of heaven, or withheld them, when he saw fit. Indeed, if we limit the words to this second sense, they would imply no blessing in which St. Peter had any peculiar share, all Christ's ordained ministers equally having in this sense the "keys" committed to them, and being bound to dispense to their flocks the word and sacraments—the treasures and blessings—of the Gospel. If we in this case interpret scripture by scripture, we shall find our view confirmed. In Is. xxii. 22, when Eliakim was called by God to be treasurer of the kingdom, we read, "The key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; "so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none "shall open." Here, it is true, there seems no place for the idea of admitting to, or excluding from, the kingdom of Judah. But when our Lord takes these words into His own mouth, and speaks of Himself as "He that hath the key of David, He that openeth, and no man shutteth; "and shutteth, and no man openeth" (Rev. iii. 7.), and in the next verse says, "Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can "shut it"; and a little farther on in the same Divine message, "Him "that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of My God: and "he shall go no more out":—it is plain that our Lord uses the figure of the keys in the *first* of the senses given above. We can hardly then shut out this sense, when He uses the expression of His favoured Apostle. It need hardly be added that, just as in the case of the promise to build the Church upon St. Peter in the verse before, so in this gift of the keys, that which was *remarkably fulfilled* in St. Peter, was *true* of the other Apostles also. It must also be noted that neither St. Peter nor any others could open or shut except in accordance with the instructions of their Master, and that these acts are only effectual when in agreement with His will.

"Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth" &c. The repetition of this

'art called the Rock, and upon this rock 'I will build My Church,' surely few would be found to argue that the first 'Rock' referred to St. Peter, and the second to something quite different. True, in the Greek the word for *Peter* is masculine, and that for the *rock* feminine, but we must remember that Jesus would probably not speak in Greek, but in the Jewish tongue, in which probably the two words would

20 °Then charged He His disciples that they should tell no man that He was Jesus the Christ. A.D. 29. ° ch. 17. 9.

21 ¶ From that time forth began Jesus [P] to shew unto His disciples, how that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. [P] ch. 20. 17. Mark 9. 31. & 10. 33. Luke 18. 31. & 24. 6, 7.

22 Then Peter took Him, and began to rebuke Him, saying, [2] Be it far from Thee, Lord: this shall not be unto Thee. [2] Gr. *Pity thyself.*

promise to the Church at large (See on xviii. 18.) is a great help towards understanding it. It is to be observed that, both here and in that place, the binding and loosing are of *things*, not of *persons*; so that the words seem to convey a general power of government and discipline. To 'bind' and to 'loose' are said to be familiar Jewish expressions for to forbid and to allow. Our Lord here declares that the sentences and decrees of His Church on earth will, if in accordance with His will, be confirmed and ratified in heaven (See on St. John xx. 23. for the special application of this power to the remission and retention of sin.). We may gather from this blessing being spoken to St. Peter singly that the Apostles possessed, each separately, the same power which in other cases would be exercised by the Church collectively (See 1 Cor. iii. 5. 1 Tim. i. 20.).

20. **"Tell no man."** Not as yet. The time was coming when it would be their special charge to tell every man, preaching the Gospel to every creature. But as yet few were prepared to receive the blessed truth which the Apostles were beginning to realize. Men were to be taught as they were able to receive, and according to the measure of their previous acceptance of truth (See on viii. 4. and on St. Mark v. 43.).

21—28. Jesus foretells His Passion. Rebuke of St. Peter. The Cross to be borne.

St. Mark viii. 31—ix. 1. St. Luke ix. 22—27.

21. **"From that time forth."** The Apostles, having been strengthened by the confession of their Lord's Godhead made in their name by St. Peter, are now better prepared to bear the prophecy of His sufferings, of which from this time He spoke clearly and often (See xvii. 22, 23.). This was about a year before the fulfilment of the words.

22. **"Peter took Him," &c.** He took Jesus apart, or else laid his hand upon Him in his eagerness. Perhaps he was uplifted by the praise just bestowed upon his confession, and the promises made to himself. Any how it is quite in accordance with his forward eager character thus over-boldly to answer his Master. He could not bear the thought of His sufferings and death, and, as though he himself knew better, or could

be the same. 'Cephas.' Besides, as the feminine word would scarcely be suitable for the name of the Apostle, so neither would the masculine word (which generally signifies a stone rather than a rock,) have been so suitable for the rock on which the Church was to be built. So that this argument is not of much weight.

A.D. 29.

23 But He turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee
q See 2 Sam. 19. 22.
r Rom. 8. 7.
behind Me, q Satan: r thou art an offence unto Me:
for thou savourest not the things that be of God,
but those that be of men.

s ch. 10. 38. Luke 14. 27. Acts 14. 22. 1 Thess. 3. 3. 2 Tim. 3. 12.
24 s Then said Jesus unto His disciples, If any
man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and
take up his cross, and follow Me.

t Luke 17. 33. John 12. 25.
25 For t whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and
whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it.

u Ps. 49. 7, 8.
26 For what is a man profited, if he shall gain
the whole world, and lose his own soul? or u what
shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

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hinder their accomplishment, he passionately exclaimed, "This shall not "be unto Thee." How little as yet did the Apostle know of the work which "the Christ the Son of the living God" had come into the world to do!

23. "Get thee behind Me, Satan." The very words Jesus had spoken to the devil in the wilderness! (St. Luke iv. 8.) And now they are spoken to him, on whom He had but just bestowed such blessings! Yet it is not so much the Apostle himself who is addressed in these startling words as Satan, whom Jesus discerns as it were lurking behind the Apostle, and making use of him to suggest the temptation so hard to the Human Nature which had to endure. How severe that temptation was we may gather from our Lord's own words, "Now is My soul troubled; and "what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour" (St. John xii. 27.), as well as from His prayer in the garden of Gethsemane, "O My Father, "if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me" (xxvi. 39.). It is worth noticing that the temptation which St. Peter uttered, and that which the devil put before our Lord in the wilderness, and which drew from Him the same rebuke, were really the same temptation—namely, to take *the crown without the cross.*

"Thou art an offence unto Me." A stumbling-stone. Here the human instrument of Satan's temptation is addressed in his own person. It is as though He said, 'Thou, who wast to be the foundation-stone of 'My church, art now a stone of stumbling, seeking to make Me fall':— "so little" (as has been thoughtfully said) "does his fitness to be a "foundation-stone consist in any thing but what this Master-builder will "yet make of him" (*Stier.*).

"Thou savourest not" &c. That is, thou dost not apprehend, or perceive. Thy judgment of things is a human judgment; thou speakest as a natural man, not as one perceiving spiritual things.

24. "If any man will come after Me." Jesus had declared His own suffering, and now He would say, 'So far from forbidding Me to suffer, 'ye too must be sharers in My suffering' (See on x. 38.).

26. "Soul." The word translated "soul" twice in this verse is the same which is translated "life" in the verse before. Here it of course means *eternal* life, and so the meaning is given correctly by the word "soul."

"What shall a man give" &c. That is, what ransom. What is there so precious or so great as that a man can offer it to God, thereby to pur-

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25. "*Whosoever will save*" *&c.* This verse is almost a repetition of x. 39, and in both places follows the same thought —the taking up of the cross. See on x. 39.

27 For [x] the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father [y] with His angels; [z] and then He shall reward every man according to his works. A.D. 29. [x] ch. 26. 64. [y] Dan. 7. 10. Zech. 14. 5. ch. 25. 31. Jude 14.

28 Verily I say unto you, There be some stand-

[z] Job 34. 11. Ps. 62. 12. Prov. 24. 12. Jer. 17. 10. & 32. 19. Rom. 2. 6. 1 Cor. 3. 8. 2 Cor. 5. 10. 1 Pet. 1. 17. Rev. 2. 23. & 22. 12.

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chase eternal life? No; his life—his soul—is beyond all price, save only that which God has Himself paid to redeem it. "No man may deliver "his brother, nor make agreement unto God for him. For it cost more to "redeem their souls; so that he must let that alone for ever; yea, though "he live long and see not the grave" (Ps. xlix. 7—9. *Prayer-book version.*).

27. **"For."** This is the reason of the foregoing. The priceless value of a man's real *life* will be proved when Christ comes to judge the world.

"The Son of man." Though this is the usual title by which our Lord speaks of Himself, yet here it has a more than common fitness, for it is specially *as Man* that He will judge, because it is *as Man* that He knows our infirmities. God "hath given Him authority to execute judg-"ment also, *because He is the Son of man*" (St. John v. 27.).

28. **"There be some standing here," &c.** The Coming of the Son of man here spoken of cannot mean His final Coming to judge the world, although that is plainly spoken of in the verse before, because all those then standing by did undoubtedly taste of death, and the end is not yet. Two other interpretations of this difficult saying have most claim to consideration. 1. That the words refer to the Coming of Christ in power to take vengeance on the Jews in the destruction of Jerusalem; an event elsewhere spoken of as the Coming of the Son of man, being indeed the most awful and instructive type and foreshadowing of His final Coming to judgment (See on the whole of xxiv.). St. John at any rate long outlived those fearful days, dying about A.D. 100, whereas the destruction of Jerusalem took place A.D. 70, or about forty years after the speaking of these words (See on the remarkable words of our Lord concerning this Apostle, which should be compared with the present saying, St. John xxi. 22.). However, this interpretation takes no account of the remarkable position of the words, which in all the three earlier Gospels stand immediately after the mention of the taking up of the cross, death, and judgment, and immediately before the Transfiguration. 2. The second sense regards the saying as having special reference to the approaching Transfiguration. This was the opinion of many of the ancient interpreters, and accords best with the peculiar position of the words. It is true that the words in St. Mark's Gospel (ix. 1.) "Till they have seen the kingdom of God "come with power" seem at first sight almost more than could be spoken of the vision of Christ's glory in the Transfiguration, but, this event being regarded as a vision of the future coming of Christ in His kingly glory, and the force of the sentence being placed upon the word "seen" (or "see" in St. Matt. and St. Luke), it seems possible to understand the saying in this sense. We may unfold it thus: Christ had spoken of the Cross, of sacrificing life itself for Him, and of His Coming to judgment. The natural heart would shrink from these hard sayings. Therefore He would encourage His disciples by a promise, saying as it were, 'Are ye afraid of that death I have spoken of? Do 'ye tremble at the sacrifice? Does the future Coming to judgment seem

A.D. 29. ing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in His kingdom.

CHAPTER XVII.

1 *The Transfiguration of Christ.* 14 *He healeth the lunatick,* 22 *foretelleth His own passion,* 24 *and payeth tribute.*

AND after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart,

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'too distant to support you in the nearer trials? Well then, I tell 'you that some of you shall not have to meet these trials until they 'have actually *seen* in a vision My glorious Coming in My kingdom. 'I will grant them a sight of that glory to cheer and support them 'when they are called not to the crown but to the Cross.' By "His "kingdom" our Lord seems to mean His kingly power and majesty (See farther on xvii. 1.).

CHAPTER XVII.

1—9. The Transfiguration.

St. Mark ix. 2—10. St. Luke ix. 28—36.

1. **"After six days."** The mention of the time in all three Gospels (See *Note*) seems to connect the Transfiguration closely with the conversation immediately before related, which stands in the same place in all. On this account it is thought that the prophecy, "There be some "standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of "man coming in His kingdom", was fulfilled (though without shutting out the possibility of a still farther fulfilment in the first of the senses there given,) in the Transfiguration, when the three chosen witnesses were allowed to behold their Lord as He will appear when He comes in His glory and majesty at the last day. This view is in a great measure confirmed by St. Peter's words, who says, "We have not followed cun- "ningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the *power and* "*coming* of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of His *Majesty*. "For He received from God the Father honour and glory, when there "came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory, This is My be- "loved Son, in whom I am well-pleased. And this voice which came "from heaven we heard, when we were with Him in the holy mount" (2 St. Peter i. 16—18.). In this passage, if the "*power and coming*" are understood of that which St. Peter beheld in the "holy mount", then plainly we have here a strong argument in favour of the view that when our Lord spoke of some who should see Him "*coming in His* "*kingdom*," He was speaking of His approaching Transfiguration (See on xvi. 28.).

"Peter, James, and John." These three favoured Apostles had

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1. "*After six days.*" St Mark uses the same expression. St. Luke says "About "an eight days after." "An eight days" would answer to our 'week,' the Jews being accustomed (as we know from the Resurrection being always spoken of as taking place on the *third* day) to count in the day *from* which, as well as that *to* which, they reckoned. Thus the two accounts are perfectly consistent.

"*An high mountain.*" What mountain this was can only be guessed at now. An old tradition assigns the site of the Transfiguration to Mount Tabor, but, as this was a fortified hill, the tradition is most improbable.

2 and was transfigured before them: and His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light. A.D. 29.

3 And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with Him.

already been the chosen witnesses of their Lord's power over death in the raising of Jairus' daughter. They were afterwards to be the witnesses of His awful Agony in the garden. Now they are to be witnesses of His glory. We must not fail to observe that the Transfiguration took place shortly after our Lord's more express declaration of His approaching sufferings and death, and that these were the subject of His conversation with Moses and Elias (See St. Luke.). Hence the Transfiguration would comfort and strengthen the three Apostles, and prevent their being cast down overmuch by the very opposite scene they were to witness in the garden of Gethsemane, and by the still more awful scenes which followed. The rejection and shameful death of their Master were very terrible; but had they not had a glimpse given them of His glory? It was very terrible to behold Him crucified between two thieves; but had they not seen Him between two saints? And might not this give them hope? They would see how glory and suffering were joined together, and understand, in part at least, how their Lord might be "for "the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour" (Hebr. ii. 9.).

2. **"Transfigured."** That is, changed in appearance. We may perhaps suppose that Jesus appeared to the three Apostles now as He appeared afterwards to one of them (St. John) in the island of Patmos. Compare with the passage before us the description in Rev. i. 14—16. "His head and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and "His eyes were as a flame of fire; and His feet like unto fine brass, "as if they burned in a furnace; and His voice as the sound of many "waters . . . and His countenance was as the sun shineth in his "strength." Doubtless our Lord's whole sacred Person appeared full and overflowing with light, streaming from Him with marvellous splendour. It was no borrowed or reflected brightness which shone forth upon Him, like that which lighted up the face of Moses when he came down from Mount Sinai. It was His own proper glory, permitted for this brief moment to shine forth through the veil of His flesh. And we can well imagine, if (as we may gather from St. Luke ix. 37.) the Transfiguration occurred at night, how the awful light and splendour of the vision would be the greater by contrast with the surrounding darkness upon the mountain. We have seen above how St. Peter in after years recalls the glorious vision. And doubtless St. John also had it in his mind when he wrote, "We beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten of "the Father" (St. John i. 14.).

3. **"Moses and Elias."** It has been sometimes asked how the

3. "*Moses and Elias.*" The *bodily* appearance of these two saints opens up a very mysterious and deeply interesting question. Undoubtedly it must be held that between death and resurrection man has a solely spiritual existence. The general teaching of holy Scripture is that the spirits of the good are in a happy state and place, the "Paradise" of which Jesus spoke to the penitent thief, waiting for the final glory and joy which they shall enter at the last day, when their bodies being raised from the dead shall be changed and glorified and become immortal (See on St. Luke xvi. 23.). Our Church's language is in accordance with this Scriptural teaching; for, in her Office for the Burial of the Dead,

A.D. 29. 4 Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if Thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.

[a] 2 Pet. 1. 17. 5 [a] While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the

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Apostles could know who they were whom they saw. It is easy to suppose that they were divinely inspired to know them, and this question would not be worth naming except that the fact of these two saints being recognised by the Apostles may well confirm our cherished hope of knowing one another in the world to come. But why did Moses and Elijah appear? Probably as representing the law and the prophets, and in order to show that these led up to Christ, and that "the Old Testament is not "contrary to the New" (Article vii.).

4. "Three tabernacles." Or tents of boughs. The wish in the Apostle's mind was no doubt to keep the glorious Beings whom he beheld longer present, by building for them shrines in which they might abide. Although indeed St. Peter speaks to our Lord alone, yet his thought seems too much to place the three on an equality, as though he did not truly feel how mightily the One excelled the others. This he was to be taught as the vision ended. His words however were only the wild outbreak of an almost stupefying amazement, for both St. Mark and St. Luke tell us that he knew not what he said.

5. "A bright cloud." Literally, a 'cloud of light,' such as was the Shechinah, or bright cloud which rested upon the mercy-seat as the token of the presence of God. St. Peter calls it the "excellent glory" (2 St. Peter i. 17.).

"A voice." Three times during our Lord's sojourn on earth was this awful voice heard. First at His baptism; secondly at His transfiguration; and thirdly when, in answer to His prayer, "Father, glorify Thy

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she speaks of the spirits of them that depart hence in the Lord living with God, and of the souls of the faithful after death being in joy and felicity: but nevertheless looks forward to some still greater glory at the coming of the Lord, when she prays that we, with all the faithful departed, may have our perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul. Let us see how this doctrine bears upon the appearance of Moses and Elijah in the Transfiguration. With regard to Elijah there is less difficulty, inasmuch as we believe that, being taken to heaven without dying, his body underwent at that time the same change which the bodies of the righteous who are alive at Christ's coming shall undergo. "We shall not all sleep, but "we shall all be changed" (1 Cor. xv. 51.). The case of Moses is more difficult. In the last chapter of the Book of Deuteronomy, we read of the death and burial of Moses, although in very mysterious language. "So Moses the ser- "vant of the Lord died there in the land "of Moab, according to the word of the "Lord. And He buried him in a valley "in the land of Moab, over against Beth- "peor: but no man knoweth of his sepul- "chre unto this day." From this passage we should imagine that the body of Moses was still dead. And yet it appeared at the Transfiguration. This difficulty has led some to suppose that Moses was raised from the dead immediately after death so as to join Enoch and Elijah, and that thus he is an example of the risen body, as Elijah of the body changed without dying: but this is only to solve one difficulty by another. It is better simply to say that the spirit of Moses was allowed for the time to assume a human form, so as to be visible to human eyes. It is plain however we cannot as yet pierce the depths of this mystery (See on xxvii. 52.). The mysterious passage in St. Jude 9, concerning Michael the Archangel disputing with the devil about the body of Moses may have some bearing upon this matter, especially as from Daniel xii. 1—3. it appears that Michael is the Archangel of the Resurrection.

cloud, which said, [b]This is My beloved Son, [c]in whom I am well pleased; [d]hear ye Him. A.D. 29.

6 [e]And when the disciples heard *it*, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid.

7 And Jesus came and [f]touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid.

8 And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only.

9 And as they came down from the mountain, [g]Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead.

10 ¶ And His disciples asked Him, saying, [h]Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come?

[b] ch. 3. 17. Mark 1. 11. Luke 3. 22.
[c] Isai. 42. 1.
[d] Deut. 18. 15, 19. Acts 3. 22, 23.
[e] 2 Pet. 1. 18.
[f] Dan. 8. 18. & 9. 21. & 10. 10, 18.
[g] ch. 16. 20. Mark 8. 30.
[h] Mal. 4. 5. ch. 11. 14.

"Name," there came "a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified "it, and will glorify it again" (St. John xii. 28.).

"Hear ye Him." Moses and Elijah are gone. Jesus alone remains to be adored and served. The former only came to do honour to Him. There is no need of "three tabernacles." Only make thy heart a tabernacle for Him who will come and abide there. Probably in these words "Hear ye Him" there may be some allusion to the prophecy of Moses, who, when speaking of Christ as a Prophet like unto himself, adds, "Unto "Him ye shall hearken" (Deut. xviii. 15. Acts iii. 22.).

7. **"Touched them."** This was probably to bring them back to a sense of reality, as well as to show them that He Himself was with them still in His familiar human body to guide and comfort them. The cloud had not as yet "received Him out of their sight" (Acts i. 9.).

8. **"Jesus only."** This would teach them that the Law and the Prophets had done their work, and ended in Christ. Moses and Elijah belonged to the older covenant. That was to give place to the new. They pass out of sight. "Jesus only" remains.

9. **"Tell the vision to no man."** The word "vision" must not mislead us. It simply means something *seen*, and in no way denies the *reality* of that which was seen. But why were the chosen three to keep the vision secret till after the Resurrection? We cannot be sure. It may have been to deepen the impression in their own hearts: or it may have been that the rest of the disciples were not able to receive it, and might either have disbelieved it, or have been jealous of the privilege granted to the three. The Resurrection of our Lord, and the wonders attending it, would open the minds of His disciples to the reception of many truths, which would not have been understood before.

10—13. Discourse as to the coming of Elias.

St. Mark ix. 11—13.

10. **"Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come?"** The prophecy of Malachi (iv. 5.) as to the coming of Elijah before the coming of Christ was much dwelt upon by the Jews. The three Apostles had just beheld the form of Elijah in the Transfiguration, but they had also witnessed his disappearance in the cloud of light. This reminded

A.D. 29.

11 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and [i] restore all things.

12 [k] But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but [l] have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise [m] shall also the Son of man suffer of them.

13 [n] Then the disciples understood that He spake unto them of John the Baptist.

14 ¶ And when they were come to the multitude, there came to Him a *certain* man, kneeling down to Him, and saying,

15 Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatick, and sore vexed: for ofttimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water.

16 And I brought him to Thy disciples, and they could not cure him.

17 Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to Me.

[i] Mal. 4. 6. Luke 1. 16, 17. Acts 3. 21.
[k] ch. 11. 14.
[l] ch. 14. 3, 10.
[m] ch. 16. 21.
[n] ch. 11. 14.

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them of the prophecy, but also perplexed them much. If this were all they were to see of Elijah, what could the prophecy mean? And were the scribes right in understanding it literally?

11. "Elias truly shall first come," &c. This is not a prophecy by our Lord of something future, as we see from the next verse, but merely a repetition of Malachi's prophecy, as though it were, 'It was truly said 'that Elias shall first come.' By the words "restore all things" our Lord means set in order and prepare all things for His coming, which was the work John the Baptist came to do,—"to make ready a people "prepared for the Lord" (St. Luke i. 17.). Some however think such an expression as this too great to have been entirely fulfilled by St. John the Baptist, and so would see in it a hint of another forerunner before the second coming of the Lord, which would also be in stricter fulfilment of the prophecy of Malachi (See on xi. 14.).

12. "Whatsoever they listed." That is, whatsoever they pleased. Though the martyrdom of St. John the Baptist was the act of one wicked family, yet our Lord speaks as though many were concerned in it, for all who, like the Pharisees, rejected him and rejoiced in his death might well be classed together.

14—21. Healing of the lunatic child.

St. Mark ix. 14—29. St. Luke ix. 37—42.

15. "Lunatick." That is, insane. In the fuller account of St. Mark, where this miracle is discussed, the father of the child speaks of him from the first as possessed by a "dumb devil," and the whole history shows that it is a case of Satanic possession; so that the word "lunatick" here only describes one of the *effects* of this possession in the present case (See on viii. 28.).

18 And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour. A.D. 29.

19 Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out?

20 And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, [o] If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

[o] ch. 21. 21. Mark 11. 23. Luke 17. 6. 1 Cor. 12. 9. & 13. 2.

21 Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.

22 ¶ [p] And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men:

[p] ch. 16. 21. & 20. 17. Mark 8. 31. & 10. 33. Luke 9. 22. & 18. 31.

23 and they shall kill Him, and the third day He shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry. & 24. 6, 7.

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20. "Because of your unbelief:" &c. This verse is recorded by St. Matthew only. At the bottom of the failure of the disciples to cast out the devil lay that which is at the bottom of all failure in spiritual things—unbelief. The disciples lacked a deep undoubting faith in their Lord's power, and in their own as derived from Him. Yet they had at other times cast out devils. Thus we see that their faith wavered and flickered, as it were. It was not stedfast, not always ready, not always unshaken. So St. Peter's faith failed him on the water (xiv. 30, 31.). So St. James, speaking of the power of prayer, says, "But let him ask in "faith, nothing wavering" (St. James i. 6.).

"If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed," &c. This wonderful description of the power of faith is repeated by our Lord on two other occasions (xxi. 21. and St. Luke xvii. 6.). Our Lord means that the least particle of true genuine undoubting faith can do the greatest wonders. By mountains are meant any great hindrances and obstacles (See St. Luke iii. 5.). Our Lord does not speak of *literal* mountains. To remove them would be of little value compared with the removal of mountains of pride and unbelief. True faith *together with miraculous gifts* could work mighty outward miracles, but they are far less in God's sight than such works as are done by "faith working by love." St. Paul says, "Though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have "not charity, I am nothing" (1 Cor. xiii. 2.).

22—23. Our Lord again foretells His death and resurrection.

St. Mark ix. 30—32. St. Luke ix. 43—45.

23. "They were exceeding sorry." It seems strange to us, looking on our Lord's life and words in the light streaming back upon them from the cross, to see how slow the Apostles themselves were to understand the

A.D. 29. 24 ¶ And [q] when they were come to Capernaum, they that received [2] tribute *money* came to Peter, and said, Doth not your Master pay tribute?

25 He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers?

26 Peter saith unto Him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free.

27 Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them,

[q] Mark 9. 33.

[2] Called in the original, *didrachma*, being in value fifteen pence: See Exod. 30. 13. & 38. 26.

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oft-repeated prophecies of His approaching death and resurrection. The words here seem very plain, yet they understood them not, and could only grieve for what seemed to them so terrible, being afraid to ask Him for any further explanation after what had occurred last time when St. Peter ventured to "rebuke" Him (xvi. 21, 22.).

24—27. The tribute-money.

24. "Tribute money." Literally the half-shekel, the sum required to be paid annually by all Jews of twenty years old and upwards towards the Temple at Jerusalem, being thus a sort of Church-rate. The *annual* payment of this sum was a human enlargement of the original Divine command, which referred only to the time of numbering the people (See Exod. xxx. 12—15.). The following miracle is recorded by St. Matthew only, which is natural, since he wrote for the Jewish Christians, and the miracle was in fulfilment of a Jewish law.

25. "Jesus prevented him." To 'prevent' literally means to *go before*, and in old times was used for going before so as to *lead* another, as in the Collect beginning "Prevent us, O Lord, in all our doings." It is now used in quite an opposite sense for *hindering*,—getting before another so as to *stop* him. In the text the meaning is that Jesus spoke before St. Peter could ask Him.

"Of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute?" St. Peter had answered the collector of the tribute at once with "Yes," as though sure that Jesus would fulfil the law in all things, especially in a matter which was for the honour of God's house; or possibly as knowing that Jesus had been in the habit of paying this tribute before. He is not blamed for his ready assent. But our Lord would lead him back by the question He puts to him to deeper thoughts of His own Divine nature, such as had given rise to the Apostle's confession, "Thou art "the Christ, the Son of the living God" (xvi. 16.).

26. "Then are the children free." The kings of the earth do not take taxes from their own children. Neither will God, the King of kings, require the tax from His own Son. The Son is free. He need not pay it. Observe the whole meaning here depends upon the fact that the tax spoken of was one given, not to man, but to God for the service of His Temple.

27 "Lest we should offend them." "Offend" in the Bible must never be understood in our modern sense of hurting another's feelings, or displeasing him. It always means to cause to stumble, or to put a

go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find [2]a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for Me and thee. A.D. 29.

[2] Or, *a stater.* It is half an ounce of silver, in value 2*s.* 6*d.* after 5*s.* the ounce.

CHAPTER XVIII.

1 *Christ warneth His disciples to be humble and harmless:* 7 *to avoid offences, and not to despise the little ones:* 15 *teacheth how we are to deal with our brethren, when they offend us:* 21 *and how oft to forgive them:* 23 *which He setteth forth by a parable of the king that took account of his servants,* 32 *and punished him who shewed no mercy to his fellow.*

AT [a]the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? [a] Luke 22. 24.

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stumblingblock in another's way (See on v. 29.). If our Lord had asserted His true rights, and claimed to be free from this tax because He was the Son of God, it would have roused the enmity of the Jews, and caused them to blaspheme.

"**Go thou to the sea, and cast an hook,**" &c. Our Lord has just *claimed* to be the Son of God. He now *proves* that He is so by His miraculous foreknowledge and power.

"**A piece of money.**" In the original the exact coin is named. It is of the same value as the shekel, and therefore the amount required for two persons, Jesus graciously providing for St. Peter too. They probably were at the time without the means of paying.

CHAPTER XVIII.

1—14. Discourse concerning Christ's little ones.

St. Mark ix. 36—50. St. Luke ix. 46—50.

1. "**Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?**" By the kingdom of heaven it is probable that the disciples understood a kingdom of power and glory, such as, in their ignorance of the true nature of that kingdom, they expected to see their Lord establish on earth. The dispute would very naturally arise both from the special blessing bestowed upon St. Peter, and from the closer companionship with our Lord of the three who had been with Him in the Mount (though their fellow-disciples did not yet know of the glorious sight they had been permitted to witness there). The same desire for greatness appears again at a season when we should least expect it (St. Luke xxii. 24.), and in the case of the sons of Zebedee, when they desired to sit on either side of the Lord in His glory (St. Mark x. 37.).

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1. "*At the same time.*" Not to be pressed too closely (See Note on xiv. 1.), but meaning here 'about the same time,'—shortly after the events last recorded.

"*Came the disciples unto Jesus, saying.*" In St. Mark we read that our Lord first asked His disciples what it was that they had disputed among themselves by the way, and that they held their peace. If, as is somewhat doubtful, the two accounts refer to the same occasion, how are we to reconcile them? Perhaps by supposing St. Matthew to give briefly the general sense; for, though the disciples did not speak their thoughts aloud, yet Jesus "perceived the thought of their heart" (St. Luke), and they by their very silence acknowledged to it.

A.D. 29. 2 And Jesus called a little child unto Him, and set him in the midst of them,

b Ps. 131. 2. ch. 19. 14. Mark 10. 14. Luke 18. 16. 1 Cor. 14. 20. 1 Pet. 2. 2. 3 and said, Verily I say unto you, b Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

c ch. 20. 27. & 23. 11. 4 c Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

d ch. 10. 42. 5 And d whoso shall receive one such little child in My name receiveth Me.

e Luke 17. 1, 2. 6 e But whoso shall offend one of these little ones

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2. "A little child." He was old enough to come to Christ when He called him, and yet a *little* child, for St. Mark says that, after setting him in the midst of the disciples, He took him in His arms.

3. "Except ye be converted." We must not suppose our Lord to imply that His Apostles then needed conversion from sin to holiness. He spoke the words as a *general* truth, as though it were 'Except *a man* 'be converted.' Still He may have desired to warn even His Apostles that they needed turning from the pride and ambition which led them to such thoughts of greatness as they had cherished. We may notice that the word "converted" simply means 'turned,' and by no means implies all that is often understood by it in our modern use of the word.

"As little children." In gentleness, simplicity, love, and humility.

"Ye shall not enter" &c. The Apostles had disputed which should be greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Jesus tells them they should not even *enter* that kingdom at all unless with changed and humble hearts. By the "kingdom of heaven" in this place our Lord seems to mean that kingdom in its perfected and glorified state hereafter, rather than in its imperfect and militant state here (See on xiii. 43.).

4. "As this little child." 'So as to be like this little child.' No sermon could preach humility so eloquently as this little child. Yet it is not that one child alone that preaches. Every gentle modest child preaches to us the same lesson of humility,—humility in lowly thoughts of ourselves,—humility in looking up to others as wiser and better than ourselves,—humility in readiness to be taught, and a heart ever open to the acceptance of truth. How utterly does our Lord here condemn all that pride of worldly rank and position, that constant measuring of ourselves and others by outward differences, which is the very spirit of the world!

5. "Whoso shall receive" &c. The blessing is not alone for those who *imitate*. Little children are dear to Christ: therefore there is also a blessing for those who *receive* them in His name. But what is to receive them in Christ's name? Surely it is to tend and help and care for them because they belong to Christ, and as a work of love to Him. And what

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5, 6. St. Mark and St. Luke (supposing them to describe the same occurrence as St. Matthew here) both insert after the 5th verse the confession of St. John as to having forbidden one to cast out devils in Christ's name, St. Mark only, however, returning to the remainder of the present conversation.

"*Offend.*" See on v. 29. and xvii. 27.

which believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and *that* he were drowned in the depth of the sea. A.D. 29.

7 Woe unto the world because of offences! for [f] it must needs be that offences come; but [g] woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!

[f] Luke 17. 1. 1 Cor. 11. 19.
[g] ch. 26. 24.

8 [h] Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast *them* from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire.

[h] ch. 5. 29, 30.

9 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast *it* from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire.

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is the blessing promised? "Receiveth Me." No less a reward than Christ Himself, who was "meek and lowly in heart," and who dwells with him "that is of a contrite and humble spirit" (Is. lvii. 15.), and counts all works of love done to the poor and lowly as done to Himself (See xxv. 40.). In St. Luke our Lord's promise goes even a step higher.

6. "Which believe in Me." Observe the honour paid to even a childish faith. Such a faith may be imperfect in degree, but it is very perfect in kind. It may be an uninstructed faith, but it is a very loving and trusting faith. It is oftentimes "faith as a grain of mustard-seed," which only needs to grow and expand, unchecked and uninjured, to be able to "remove mountains" (See on xvii. 20.).

7. "Because of offences." That is, 'Because of the stumbling-blocks 'and temptations to sin which it will put in the way of My little ones' (See on St. Luke xvii. 1, 3.).

"It must needs be." St. Paul shows one reason of this in a special case. It is, "that they which are approved may be made manifest" (1 Cor. xi. 19.). If there were no stumbling-blocks and temptations, this would not be a world of trial. They are necessary for our trial. But this does not make the sin of those who create them less.

8. "If thy hand or thy foot offend thee." We meet with this command in the Sermon on the Mount (See v. 30.). Here it is repeated, the mention of "offences" having led to it. We should in this place almost expect our Lord to say, 'If thy hand or thy foot offend *another*,' that being the main thought of the passage, as shown by the verses before and after this saying (7. and 10,); but we must remember the true way to keep from causing others to sin is to keep from sin ourselves. There are no stumbling-blocks so dangerous as the sins of professing Christians. So, if we would avoid causing "offences" to others, we must cut off from ourselves whatever causes *us* to fall. These verses may also be looked upon as carrying on the thought of the earlier part of the discourse, which teaches us to be like little children; as though Jesus would bid us imitate their purity and innocence as well as their humility. We see from this severe command that to become like little children is "no

A.D. 29.

10 Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven [i] their angels do always [k] behold the face of My Father which is in heaven.

[i] Ps. 34. 7. Zech. 13. 7. Heb. 1. 14.
[k] Esther 1. 14. Luke 1. 19.

11 [l] For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.

[l] Luke 9. 56. & 19. 10. John 3. 17. & 12. 47.

12 [m] How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?

[m] Luke 15. 4.

"child's-play, but can be attained only by the manliest inward struggles "with the members of the old man, which alas! have already grown "so strong" (*Stier.*).

10. "Take heed that ye despise not" &c. It is the despising Christ's little ones,—thinking them of little consequence,—which leads to the 'offending' them. How little they are to be despised our Lord here shows. If man thinks little of them, God and the holy Angels think much. "For I say unto you" (our Lord thus solemnly reveals a heavenly truth), "That in heaven their Angels do always behold the face "of My Father which is in heaven." "Their Angels"—that is, the Angels of Christ's little ones. What other meaning can be given to these words than that of *Guardian* Angels? Plainly Christ's little ones have Angels in some way belonging to them, who stand in the presence of God. These Angels cannot mean their own glorified spirits, for the word is never used in this sense, and besides Christ is speaking of the present, not of the future. He is saying, 'Despise not one of My little ones, 'because they have their Angels in the presence of God in heaven.' We are told elsewhere that Angels are "ministering spirits sent forth "to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation" (Heb. i. 14.). But our Lord here seems to state a still farther truth, namely, that special Angels are appointed to minister to,—that is, attend upon,—special persons. When our Lord says that they "*always* behold" God's face in heaven, He seems to mean that, as in an earthly court Those of highest rank only are freely admitted into the royal presence, so these Angels, having constant access to the immediate sovereign presence of God, are of highest order and dignity.

11. "For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost." Here is lastly the truest and deepest reason for receiving and honouring Christ's little ones, namely, that Christ Himself came to save them. This is why God loves them; this is why Angels minister to them; this is why to cause them to sin is so great a crime. And we may observe that our Lord's view widens in this verse. Before He spoke plainly of *children*, though possibly with some thought of those weak and humble like children. Here He speaks of the "*lost*," and we may surely gather from this that He would have us show the same care and tenderness towards *all* for whom He died.

12. "How think ye?" &c. Our Lord would show by the Parable of the Lost Sheep His own patient and loving labour in seeking the lost, thus adding force to His last words, as though He said, 'Dare ye despise 'one, however little or however lost, whom I, the Good Shepherd, have

13 And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that *sheep*, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray. A.D. 29.

14 Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.

15 ¶ Moreover [n] if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, [o] thou hast gained thy brother.

16 But if he will not hear *thee*, *then* take with thee one or two more, that in [p] the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

[n] Lev. 19. 17. Luke 17. 3.

[o] James 5. 20. 1 Pet. 3. 1.

[p] Deut. 17. 6. & 19. 15. John 8. 17. 2 Cor. 13. 1. Heb. 10. 28.

'toiled and striven so hard to bring back to My fold? Does not this show 'that it is not God's will "that one of these little ones should perish" '(14.)? and will ye then, whether by leading astray or by mere neglect, 'help to ruin those whom God would save?' (For another use of this parable, illustrating the joy of the angels over the repenting sinner, see on St. Luke xv. 3—7.).

15—18. The treatment of an erring brother, and the power of the Church.

15. "If thy brother shall trespass against thee." The last passage was so full of love to the erring and lost, that the question of how practically to exercise such love towards the erring follows most naturally. The case suggested is that of an injury or wrong actually done to oneself, but there is nothing which would make the rule our Lord gives us less fitting for the case of any sin not touching oneself personally. Indeed we may say that the Christian man will feel any sin of a fellow-Christian as a trespass against himself, in as much as it is an injury to the body of which he is a member.

"Go and tell him his fault." Few tasks are more difficult, or require more grace, humility, and self-restraint, than this. Yet, if it is done in the spirit of love and humility, as by one sinner speaking with another, and with the "soft answer" which "turneth away wrath," it is often blessed to the *gaining* of the erring brother. By '*gaining*' is meant winning back to God, to God's people, and to thyself. Observe the singularly appropriate verse referred to in the margin, "Thou shalt not "hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy "neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him" (Lev. xix. 17.). There is also some wise advice on this matter in Ecclus. xix. 7—17. The 8th verse is specially remarkable:—"Whether it be to friend or foe, talk "not of other men's lives; and if thou canst without offence, reveal them "not." *Needlessly* to publish another's fault is more likely to harden than to soften him, and makes you (as St. Augustine says) "not his "corrector but his betrayer."

16. "Two or three witnesses." The charity which "hopeth all "things" (1 Cor. xiii. 7.) is not daunted by one failure. But, inasmuch as plain dealing and loving entreaty of brother with brother, have been

A.D. 29. 17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell *it*
q Rom. 16. 17. 1 Cor. 5. 9. 2 Thess. 3. 6, 14. 2 John 10. unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an q heathen man and a publican.

r ch. 16. 19. John 20. 23. 1 Cor. 5. 4. 18 Verily I say unto you, r Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and

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set at nought, the next time it will be well to "take with thee one or "two more," friends of both parties, and kind and sensible persons, both in order the better to persuade the erring, and also in order to protect thyself, by having witnesses who may judge between thee and the other.

17. "Tell it unto the church." Our Lord plainly, as when He used the word 'Church' before (See on xvi. 18.), speaks here *prophetically. Then* He said, "I *will* build My church." *Now* He is regarding this Church as already built, speaking of it as it should be after He was ascended. It is plain our Lord intended that His Church should possess some means of hearing such cases as should be brought before it, and of pronouncing sentence upon them. The Church must *assemble* in some way for such purposes, and, like all other societies, commit the authority it possesses to certain persons. It would be impossible for the *whole Church*—that is, all the members of it—to hear and to judge. Our Lord does not say *how* this power is to be exercised. That may be left to the Church itself to arrange. The authority of the Church to hear and to judge is of divine appointment. The *manner* of exercising that authority is of human order. (As to the authority of the Church in matters of *doctrine* see on Acts xv.) It is plain again that the power belonging to the entire Church,—the Church Catholic—in hearing and judging, belongs also to each *branch* of the Church, so far as regards matters affecting only that branch. This the nature of the case would show, but it is proved sufficiently by the directions of St. Paul to the Corinthian Church (1 Cor. v. 1—5. 2 Cor. ii. 6—11.).

"Let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." This can mean nothing less than 'Let him be excommunicated,—shut out 'from the Church, and from its means of grace.' It is the same thing as the delivering over to Satan (1 Cor. v. 5.), which expression, terrible as it sounds, is still no hopeless abandonment of the sinner, but a sentence prompted by love, since its object is in the same verse said to be, "That the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." The heathen were of course counted and treated as strangers, not belonging to the chosen people, and the publicans, though Jews, were equally despised and avoided (See on v. 46.). Yet, if the obstinate offender is so to be treated, it is only until his obstinacy yields, and then there must be free and ready forgiveness on the part of the offended, and restoration on the part of the Church.

18. "Whatsoever ye shall bind" &c. This, which is a repetition of the words spoken to St. Peter before (xvi. 19.), is here plainly spoken to the *Church*. The same power which Apostles could exercise singly, on account of their gifts, belongs ordinarily to the Church as a body. We must observe that they are *things* not *persons* which are spoken of as bound or loosed; and the meaning therefore of to bind or to loose would strictly be to condemn or approve. But inasmuch as our Lord is

whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. A.D. 29.

19 ¶ [s] Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, [t] it shall be done for them of My Father which is in heaven.

[s] ch. 5. 24.

[t] 1 John 3. 22. & 5. 14.

20 For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them.

21 ¶ Then came Peter to Him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? [u] till seven times?

[u] Luke 17. 4.

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certainly speaking of such acts of the Church as are named in the verse before, and in that verse the casting out of the obstinate sinner is the main point, we cannot say the words have no reference to *persons*, and should therefore include in their meaning the condemning and absolving of persons. The general sense seems to be that the sentence of the Church, whether of condemnation or of approval, of excommunication or of absolution, if given in Christ's name and with His authority, will be ratified and confirmed in heaven (See on the much stronger passage, St. John xx. 23.).

19, 20. The blessing promised to united prayer.

19. "Again I say." This word "Again" joins this verse on to the foregoing. Our Lord has said that the sentence of the Church will stand good in God's sight. He now adds that the united voice of God's people will prevail also in another way. For even though the union be but of *two* faithful Christians, yet it has power with God, who will grant the united prayer. St. Leo, in one of his sermons, speaks thus:—"Most full "abolition of sins is then obtained, when one prayer and one confession "issueth from the whole Church. For since the Lord promiseth to the "pious agreement of two or three that He will grant whatever is so asked, "what shall be denied to a people of many thousands, fulfilling together "one observance, and supplicating in harmony through one spirit?" (*Quoted by Pusey on* Joel ii. 15.).

20. "Where two or three" &c. This promise must not be limited to prayer, as though it belonged only to the verse before. It is the clue to the whole passage. That Christ is there in the midst of them is the true reason both why the sentence of the Church on earth is confirmed in heaven, and why the united prayers of Christians find acceptance with God. Compare the promise with which this gospel ends, "Lo, "I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

"In My name." Much is meant by these simple words. They imply not only a reliance on Christ's presence and blessing, but also the acting in accordance with His will and under the guidance of His Spirit (See 1 Cor. v. 4.).

21—35. Parable of the Unmerciful Servant.

21. "Till seven times?" St. Peter had listened to our Lord's discourse as to the treatment of an erring brother and the present question

A.D. 29. 22 Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee,
x Ch. 6. 14. Mark 11. 25. Col. 3. 13. Until seven times: x but, Until seventy times seven.
23 Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants.
2 *A talent is 750 ounces of silver, which after five shillings the ounce is 187l. 10s.* 24 And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand 2 talents.

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very naturally arises out of that. It is as if he said, 'I see I am to treat 'one who sins against me kindly and gently, but how often am I to go 'on doing so? Where is the limit to forbearance?' No doubt St. Peter thought that in naming "seven times" he was making a most liberal suggestion, for the Jews, arguing from God's example in not forgiving a *fourth* transgression in the various cases named in Amos i. & ii, made three times the limit of the law of forgiveness.

22. "Until seventy times seven." Of course this is only a forcible way of saying that there must be no limit at all. The very question was wrong. No one would have asked it who knew how much and how often he himself had been forgiven.

23. "Which would take account of his servants." When does God take account of us, His servants? Certainly this cannot be only at the last day, else the latter part of the parable would be wholly out of place, for the servant could not act as he did after the final judgment. God takes account of us at all times, but especially when He leads us to take account of ourselves,—whenever, that is, by His dealings with us, His warnings and calls, He stirs us up to reckon with ourselves, and to examine (as it were) our account with Him (See on St. Luke xvi. 2.).

24. "When he had begun to reckon," &c. The king had not long to wait. Among the very first was brought up this man, "which owed "him ten thousand talents." If God's reckoning with us is to be understood of such times as those in which we reckon with ourselves, then this man represents a sinner bowed down under an overwhelming sense of guilt,—one who would exclaim, "Mine iniquities have taken hold "upon me, so that I am not able to look up: they are more than the "hairs of mine head: therefore my heart faileth me" (Ps. xl. 12.). A talent being a weight, and not a sum, we cannot tell whether talents of gold or talents of silver are here meant. Besides, there were different talents, as the Greek, the Syrian, and the Hebrew, of which however the last named, which our Lord probably would intend, was much the largest. It does not much matter, for, taking the lowest calculation, the sum is so enormous that no private person, however wealthy, could be supposed to possess as much. Even the Greek talent of silver (which

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23. "*The kingdom of heaven.*" See on iii. 2.

"*Likened unto a certain king.*" See *Note* on xi. 16.

24. "*Ten thousand talents.*" How enormous this sum was may be realized by comparing it with other sums mentioned in Scripture. In the making of the Tabernacle twenty-nine talents of gold were used (Ex. xxxviii. 24.). The king of Assyria laid upon Hezekiah as a tribute thirty talents of gold (2 Kin. xviii. 14.). And when the land was very poor at the last, after the death of king Josiah, the king of Egypt laid upon it one talent of gold (2 Chron. xxxvi. 3.). (*Abp. Trench on the Parables.*)

25 But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him [y] to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. A.D. 29. [y] 2 Kin. 4. 1. Neh. 5. 8.

26 The servant therefore fell down, and [z] worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. [z] Or, *besought him.*

27 Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt.

28 But the same servant went out, and found one

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was less than the Jewish) was worth £187. 10*s.* of our money, and ten thousand times this would be £1,875,000. It has been reckoned that, if Jewish talents of gold are meant, the sum would be seventy-two millions of pounds, one such talent being worth £7200. Our Lord simply meant to express a sum far beyond the possibility of payment. Possibly by the "servant" in the parable our Lord might mean a governor of one of the provinces under the king, such governors being in the East completely under the power of their royal masters. This would make the vastness of the sum owing sound less wonderful, such governors having to account to the king for the revenues of their provinces.

25. "To be sold." This would be allowed in certain cases by the law of the Roman Empire, as well as by that of Eastern nations. This selling represents "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, "and from the glory of His power" (2 Thess. i. 9.).

26. "Lord, have patience with me," &c. This is the terror-stricken cry of the man who hears the awful sentence of his condemnation, pronounced upon him by his own conscience. He knows it is but the echo of God's sentence, or rather the forestalling of the sentence which shall be pronounced upon him in the judgment-day, and in his fear he cries for mercy. Observe however the ignorance of this cry. How can he ever pay all? How can he even pay part of the debt? He means well, no doubt; but, if he really felt the vastness of the debt, he would not make so rash and vain a promise. Is not this the key to his after conduct? Had he felt he had been *forgiven much* he would have *loved much.* It was just because he under-rated his debt, and felt only that he was forgiven little, that he loved so little, and showed so little gratitude. But, if this servant's petition was so ignorant, what should be our cry, when we are brought to see the greatness of our debt? Not, "Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay Thee all," but, 'Lord, 'have mercy upon me, for Christ has paid the debt for me.'

27. "Loosed him, and forgave him the debt." Marvellous freedom and fulness of forgiveness! Even to the ignorant prayer and the vain promise is this vast mercy shown. Let not then the trembling sinner despair. Well may we say that God's "nature and property is ever to "have mercy and to forgive," and pray Him to "let the pitifulness of "His great mercy loose us" (*Occasional Prayers.*).

28. "Went out." Perhaps by the *going out* may be expressed the sinner's forgetfulness of God and of His mercies (*Abp. Trench, from whom much of the commentary on this parable is taken.*).

A.D. 29. of his fellowservants, which owed him an hundred
2 *The Roman penny is the eighth part of an ounce, which after five shillings the ounce is seven pence half penny, ch. 20. 2.*
[2] pence: and he laid hands on him, and took *him* by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest.

29 And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

30 And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.

31 So when his fellowservants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done.

32 Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me:

33 shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee?

34 And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.

"An hundred pence." The penny being equal to seven pence halfpenny of our money (See *Margin*), the hundred pence would be worth £3. 2*s.* 6*d.*

"Laid hands on him," &c. How utterly must he have forgotten his master's late goodness to him! He not only exacts his own trifling debt, but does so with violence and harshness. The smallness of the one debt as compared with the vastness of the other may well teach us how little any one can really sin against *us*, in comparison with the amount of our sins against God; and how ready therefore we should be to forgive.

31. "His fellowservants." These are brought in for the completeness of the story. In its spiritual meaning they are not needed: for God Himself sees all that we do, and needs not that any should tell Him.

32. "O thou wicked servant." He is called this for his ingratitude, which he was not called for his debt.

33. "Even as I had pity on thee." It is a point not to be passed over that this servant's sin was that he refused to show mercy, not when he *needed* mercy only, but when he *had received* mercy. So does St. Paul speak, "Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, "even as God for Christ's sake *hath forgiven* you" (Eph. iv. 32.). God "hath forgiven" us, first our original sin in Baptism, and after this our actual sins, whensoever we have truly repented and unfeignedly believed (*Absolution.*). So that none can say the motive for mercy to others here urged is not binding on him. Freely have we all received mercy: therefore freely must we give.

34. "Till he should pay all." That is, for ever. It is often asked, 'Do sins, once forgiven, return on the sinner for his after offences?' This passage would certainly lead one to suppose they do. Perhaps it is wrong to press the parable so far as to say that it teaches us that we may be punished at the last for the actual sins once forgiven. Rather we

35 [z] So likewise shall My heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses. A. D. 29. [z] Prov. 21. 13. ch. 6. 12. Mark 11. 26. James 2. 13.

CHAPTER XIX.

2 *Christ healeth the sick:* 3 *answereth the Pharisees concerning divorcement:* 10 *sheweth when marriage is necessary:* 13 *receiveth little children:* 16 *instructeth the young man how to attain eternal life,* 20 *and how to be perfect:* 23 *telleth His disciples how hard it is for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God,* 27 *and promiseth reward to those that forsake any thing to follow Him.*

AND it came to pass, [a] *that* when Jesus had finished these sayings, He departed from Galilee, and came into the coasts of Judæa beyond Jordan; A. D. 30. 34th Year of our Lord's life. [a] John 10. 40.

2 [b] and great multitudes followed Him; and He healed them there. [b] ch. 12. 15.

3 The Pharisees also came unto Him, tempting Him, and saying unto Him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?

4 And He answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, [c] that He which made *them* at the beginning made them male and female, [c] Gen. 1. 27. & 5. 2. Mal. 2. 15.

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should say that, when from a state of grace we fall back into a state of sin, we lose at the same time our state of justification or acceptance with God. And the fact of our former pardon and grace makes our fall the worse, and our punishment the greater.

35. "From your hearts." This is the difficult point in the forgiveness. It is easy to forgive "in word" and "in tongue"; but, if God is to accept it, it must be also "in deed and in truth" (1 St. John iii. 18.).

CHAPTER XIX.

1—12. Divorce and Marriage.

St. Mark x. 1—12.

Compare on v. 31, 32.

3. "Is it lawful" &c. The Jews were much divided as to what causes rendered divorce lawful. They come to Christ however, not to have their difficulties solved, but "tempting Him,"—hoping to induce Him to give an opinion which they could show to be contrary to the law of Moses. Probably they knew that He had already taught the sacredness of marriage with great strictness, and were bent upon upholding a less strict view.

4. "Have ye not read." Jesus takes His questioners back to the

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35. "*So likewise*" &c. See on vi. 12, 14, 15.

CHAPTER XIX.

1. "*Beyond Jordan.*" That is, on the Eastern side of the river, in the district called Peræa (See Map.). This might be called the "*coasts* of Judæa," though beyond the boundary of the province, which ended with the river. For the meaning of "coasts" see on xv. 21. Probably this was our Lord's last journey southwards, and is the same as that spoken of in St. John x. 40. If so, our Lord is leaving Galilee for the last time until after His resurrection, and many events must have happened which are not recorded by St. Matthew (See on St. Luke ix. 51.).

A.D. 30. 5 and said, [d] **For this cause shall a man leave**
[d] Eph. 5. 31. **father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife:**
[e] 1 Cor. 6. 16. & 7. 2. **and [e] they twain shall be one flesh?** Gen. 2. 24.
6 Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

[f] Deut. 24. 1. ch. 5. 31. 7 They say unto Him, [f] Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?

8 He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so.

[g] ch. 5. 32. Luke 16. 18. 1 Cor. 7. 10, 11. 9 [g] And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except *it be* for fornication, and shall marry

root of the whole matter,—to God's creation of man, and the primary law of marriage.

5. "And said." The following words (Gen. ii. 24.) are recorded as spoken by Adam, not by God. But Adam could not have spoken them except by direct revelation from God, because as yet there were no such relationships as those of father and mother. The words were spoken prophetically, and as a Divine utterance, though by the mouth of Adam.

6. "What therefore" &c. This is the judgment Christ pronounces upon the whole question. It does not declare this or that to be a lawful cause for divorce. It states the matter broadly and plainly. God ordained marriage, and joined together the man and the woman as one. Let not man then dare to put them asunder. Thus *all* divorce is condemned as the breaking of a bond ordained by God. It is *in itself* an evil, and, if in any case lawful, it is only so for the avoiding of greater evil. So our Church comments upon God's law, saying, in the Marriage Service, that God did "teach that it should never be lawful to put "asunder those whom He by Matrimony had made one."

7. "Why did Moses" &c. The Pharisees are referring to the permission given in Deut. xxiv. 1.

8. "Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered" &c. Observe how our Lord changes the word 'command' to 'suffer.' It was at most only a permission Moses gave. Moses found divorce commonly practised among the Israelites, and they were too hard-hearted to bear a violent change, so that his work was to regulate and restrain it; and the "writing" or "bill of divorcement" was established to prevent light and hasty breaches of the marriage bond. "But from the beginning it "was not so."

9. "Whosoever shall put away" &c. Jesus here condescends to answer the original question of the Pharisees, though whether publicly to them, or only privately to the disciples afterwards (See St. Mark x. 10.), is doubtful. He had, in the first instance, taken the high and true ground, and asserted the Divine origin, and the perpetual sacredness, of marriage. He here comes down, as it were, to human infirmity. It is

6. "*One flesh.*" Note how St. Paul applies this to the condemnation of sins of unchastity (1 Cor. vi. 15, 16.).

another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery. A.D. 30.

10 His disciples say unto Him, [h] If the case of the man be so with *his* wife, it is not good to marry. [h] Prov. 21.19.

11 But He said unto them, [i] All *men* cannot receive this saying, save *they* to whom it is given. [i] 1 Cor. 7. 2, 7, 9, 17.

12 For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from *their* mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and [k] there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive *it*, let him receive *it*. [k] 1 Cor. 7. 32, 34. & 9. 5, 15.

13 ¶ Then were there brought unto Him little

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as though He said, 'Yet alas! man *will* mar God's ordinance by sin. 'And when the marriage bond is thus broken by those themselves bound 'by it, then and then only, may the outward sanction be broken too. 'The *real* union is broken. Therefore the form of it may be dissolved.' In any other case, excepting for the breach of the marriage vow, to put away a wife and marry another is adultery.

"Whoso marrieth" &c. Certainly this, first of all, forbids the marrying of a woman *not* lawfully divorced, that is, of one put away for any *other* cause than the one mentioned in the last verse. It probably also forbids the marrying of a woman divorced legally on account of her adultery. Even if we do not understand our Lord's words as actually forbidding this, yet at least He is silent on the point, and His silence by no means implies permission (Compare 1 Cor. vii. 10, 11.).

10. "If the case of the man be so with his wife." That is, if the marriage bond be so strictly binding.

11. "This saying." That is, what the disciples had just said, though in a different sense, namely, that "it is good not to marry." Our Lord means that there are some for whom a single life is better, and who have grace to see that they can serve God better unmarried than they could married, and thus keep themselves unmarried "for the kingdom of hea-"ven's sake." (See 1 Cor. vii. 8, 26. and 32—34.)

12. "There be eunuchs, which have made themselves" &c. That is, There are those who have denied themselves marriage, and led a life of self-denying celibacy, for the sake of more complete devotion to Christ and His Church.

"Let him receive it." This does not mean, Let him adopt this self-sacrifice; but, Let him receive the *saying* as to the perils of marriage (as above in verse 11.). Let him understand that there are some for whom "it is not good to marry." Let him remember that "Every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or "father, or mother, or *wife*, or children, or lands, for My name's sake, "shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life" (29.).

13—15. Christ blesses little children.

St. Mark x. 13—16. St. Luke xviii. 15—17.

This subject follows very fitly upon the last. From the purity and

A.D. 30. children, that He should put *His* hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them.

14 But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and
[l] ch. 18. 3. forbid them not, to come unto Me: for [l] of such is the kingdom of heaven.

15 And He laid *His* hands on them, and departed thence.

16 ¶ And, behold, one came and said unto Him,
[m] Luke 10. 25. [m] Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?

17 And He said unto him, Why callest thou Me good? *there is* none good but one, *that is* God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.

holiness of Christian marriage, we pass to the blessing of the offspring of such holy union.

13. "**Pray.**" This word is only used by St. Matthew in this place, St. Mark and St. Luke merely having "that He should touch them," that is, lay His hands on them in blessing. The request for Christ's prayers seems to imply an ignorance of His power to bestow the blessing sought by His own act of divine grace. Indeed it is very probable the mothers sought His blessing altogether with little real sense of its value and meaning. But it would be quite in accordance with our Lord's acts on other occasions, if we suppose that the words with which He accompanied His act of blessing were in the form of a prayer, as are the blessings which we use now. We may note how these simple mothers, though possibly ignorant, were yet more in accord with the mind of Christ, and better measured His love, than the disciples who rebuked them.

16—30. The rich young man, and discourse upon riches.

St. Mark x. 17—31. St. Luke xviii. 18—30.

16. "**One came.**" He was a "ruler," as we learn from St. Luke, and he "came running, and kneeled to Him," as we learn from St. Mark, showing by his haste his eager desire for instruction, and by his attitude his humility and his respect for Christ.

"**What good thing shall I do,**" &c. There can be no doubt that this question was asked honestly. It was no "*tempting*" of Jesus, like the questions of the Pharisees. Yet it showed in the speaker a deep ignorance of himself, in that he thought he could by his own acts win eternal life. There was more knowledge of self in the Publican's cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner." This ruler did not yet know that "by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in God's sight" (Rom. iii. 20.).

17. "**Why callest thou Me good?**" Probably when the ruler said "Good Master," he was not weighing his words, but spoke in terms of common respect and civility. However he twice used the word "good":

17. "*Why callest thou Me good?*" There is another reading in this place, supported by many ancient copies, and possibly the true one, which makes our

18 He saith unto Him, Which? Jesus said, A.D. 30.
[n] Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit [n] Ex. 20. 13. Deut. 5. 17.
adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not
bear false witness,

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he spoke of Jesus as "good," and he spoke of himself doing some "good "thing." Our Lord saw that his ideas of the word were very low and imperfect, and, before He answered his question, He sought to raise them by reminding him of Him, who alone deserved the name of "good," and in whose sight even "the stars are not pure" (Job xxv. 5.). It need scarcely be said that Jesus here by no means refuses to Himself the title of "good." So far from it, He might, had it been His pleasure to reveal Himself more openly, have said, 'There is none good but One, that is, 'God: nevertheless thou saidst well, for I and My Father are one.' But the ruler did not know Jesus *as God;* he only used the word "good" of one whom he believed to be a wise and godly *man*. So that our Lord might well ask him to think of the real sense of the word he had used.

"If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." Here is the old covenant of works. If you would be saved, you must earn it by perfect obedience. "Ye shall therefore keep My statutes, and My judg-"ments; which if a man do, he shall live in them: I am the Lord" (Lev. xviii. 5. Rom. x. 5. Gal. iii. 12.). Now Christ did not mean to give this as a final answer to the young man. He was leading him on, exactly as God has led mankind on, through the law to the Gospel. Here is the law being applied to this young man's conscience. It is to convince him of sin. "By the law is the knowledge of sin" (Rom. iii. 20.): and then it is to be "a schoolmaster to bring him to Christ" (Gal. iii. 24.). When he has seen how utterly unable he is in himself to win salvation by his obedience to God's law, then he may be persuaded to come as a sinner to the Saviour.

18. **"Which?"** So persuaded is the young man that he has kept all the ordinary commandments, that he supposes our Lord must speak of some others. Jesus simply recounts the commandments of the second table, omitting the last, but summing up all in that which is in itself the fulfilment of all, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Compare St. Paul's words, "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour; therefore love "is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. xiii. 10.). It may be asked, Does Christ *purposely* omit the tenth commandment, as being that in the neglect of which the young man's sin chiefly lay? Does He stop short of "Thou shalt not covet," to see, as it were, whether the young man would mark the omission, and thus detect his besetting sin? It may be so; but more probably our Lord simply wishes to recall to the young man's mind as briefly as possible the commandments of God as set forth in the Tables of the Law, without being careful to mention each separately. This is the more probable, in that St. Mark, after the ninth commandment, puts in the words "Defraud not," which may answer to the tenth commandment, defrauding being the immediate fruit of coveting.

Lord's question to be, 'Why dost thou 'ask Me concerning the good?' The other question however—"Why callest "thou Me good?"—is given in St. Mark and St. Luke, so that, if it be different in St. Matthew, we must believe our Lord to have asked *both* questions, as though He said, 'Why do you ask Me 'about a "*good* thing," and why do you 'call *Me* "*good*," when none is good but 'God?'

A.D. 30.

19 [o] Honour thy father and *thy* mother: and, [p] Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

20 The young man saith unto Him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?

21 Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, [q] go *and* sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come *and* follow Me.

22 But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.

23 Then said Jesus unto His disciples, Verily I say unto you, That [r] a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.

o ch. 15. 4.
p Lev. 19. 18. ch. 22. 39. Rom. 13. 9. Gal. 5. 14. James 2. 8.
q ch. 6. 20. Luke 12. 33. & 16. 9. Acts 2. 45. & 4. 34, 35. 1 Tim. 6. 18, 19.
r ch. 13. 22. 1 Cor. 1. 26. 1 Tim. 6. 9, 10.

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20. "All these things have I kept." Thus does the young ruler show his ignorance of himself. He sorely needed the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount (See on v. 17, and 20—22.). He knew little of the breadth and depth of the Law which he fancied he had kept so well. This answer is no piece of hypocrisy, but a thoroughly honest one. The young man *thought* he was speaking nothing but the truth. It is to be observed that at this point St. Mark tells us that Jesus "beholding him, loved him." From the word "beholding" we may suppose that Jesus expressed His love by His earnest loving gaze. He loved him because He saw in him a character of much promise, an honesty and simplicity which might, under grace, lead him to high things. Yet the loving look would be sorrowful too, to know that such a promise would so sadly fail.

21. "If thou wilt be perfect." St. Mark and St. Luke add, "One "thing thou lackest." Are we then to suppose that our Lord allows all the rest, and accepts the young man's account of his own obedience as true? Certainly not. It is as though He said, 'Thou shalt now be 'proved. Thou hast asked Me what good thing thou shalt do to have 'eternal life. And I have told thee to keep God's law. This thou 'sayest thou hast done. Then thou art willing to do it still. Let thy 'obedience be put to the proof. God's law says, "Thou shalt have none '"other gods but Me." Hast thou no other God? Hast thou not made 'a god of thy riches? Is not covetousness idolatry? Go, and cast down 'this idol, and then thou mayest claim to obey at least one command-'ment.'

22. "He went away sorrowful." His self-righteousness was at last brought home to him. He shrank from the test. He could keep the law perhaps in the letter. The spirit was too hard for Him. He could not pluck out the right eye, and cut off the right hand (v. 29, 30.). Whether this young ruler ever repented, and, renouncing his great snare of worldly wealth, sought again Him whose loving look he could hardly forget, we know not.

23. "Hardly." That is, with difficulty. There is a most important verse introduced here by St. Mark (x. 24.), in which our Lord almost corrects His first saying, by putting the words "*trust in* riches" for

24 And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. A.D. 30.

25 When His disciples heard *it*, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved?

26 But Jesus beheld *them*, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but [s] with God all things are possible.

[s] Gen. 18. 14. Job 42. 2. Jer. 32. 17. Zech. 8. 6. Luke 1. 37.

27 Then answered Peter and said unto Him, Behold, [t] we have forsaken all, and followed Thee; what shall we have therefore?

[t] Deut. 33. 9. ch. 4. 20. Luke 5. 11.

28 And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto

"*have* riches," thus clearly explaining how, and when, riches are so great an hindrance. (See 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10, 17.)

"Kingdom of heaven." There is no reason to limit this expression here (as in xiii. 43.) to the perfected "kingdom" hereafter. It may bear its ordinary meaning of Christ's heavenly kingdom set up here on earth (See on iii. 2.). Those who loved anything better than Christ would not be able to cast in their lot with His people.

24. "It is easier for a camel" &c. This seems to be only a proverb implying anything very difficult. It was probably a common saying among the Jews. A "camel" seems to be a familiar expression for something great (See on xxiii. 24.).

25. "Who then can be saved?" The disciples are staggered at the seeming narrowness of the way, and difficulty of salvation. If riches are such a hindrance, how many more equally fatal hindrances must there be! How hard it must be for any one to be a member of a kingdom which requires such sacrifices!

26. "Jesus beheld them." We must not pass over such an expression as this, as if it were of no consequence. We often meet with notices of our Lord's *looking* on people (See on 20.), and we can hardly doubt that these looks were full of love, or grief, or reproof, as the case might be, and so touched the heart of the beholders that they could not be forgotten, and are thus fitly recorded by the Evangelists.

"With God all things are possible." Because God bestows that grace which is sufficient for us, and His strength is made perfect in our weakness (2 Cor. xii. 9.). "I can do all things," says St. Paul, "through "Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. iv. 13.). Zacchæus is an instance of a rich man for whom God's grace made salvation possible (See on St. Luke xix. 2.).

27. "Behold, we have forsaken all." This must be read with a strong force on the "*we*." St. Peter, with his usual haste, and speaking for the rest, takes for granted that *they* at any rate were safe, and asks what special reward they should have.

28. Jesus answers St. Peter's question, even though it perhaps savoured too much of the looking for a reward for works done. It was true that the Apostles had forsaken all to follow Christ, and a high place in His kingdom of glory was in store for them. Of this He freely tells them, for perhaps they needed encouragement after their question "Who then can

A.D. 30. you, That ye which have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the
u ch. 20. 21. Luke 22. 28, 29, 30. 1 Cor. 6. 2, 3. Rev. 2. 26. throne of His glory, [u] ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

29 And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.

x ch. 20. 16. & 21. 31, 32. Luke 13. 30. 30 [x] But many *that are* first shall be last; and the last *shall be* first.

"be saved?", but He tells them not of the glory without a solemn warning against thoughts of pride, given first in the words "many that are "first shall be last; and the last first," and continued in the parable at the beginning of the next chapter.

"In the regeneration." That is, the new creation. The word is oftener used of a spiritual renewal. Here it is used of the renewal of all things, of the time when there shall be "new heavens and a new earth" (2 St. Pet. iii. 13.).

"Twelve thrones, judging &c." To share Christ's throne implies great honour and glory (See Rev. iii. 21.). The same may be said of possessing thrones. The thrones imply the first rank of glory. By "judging" is here meant ruling. There are ranks and dignities in heaven, and among these the twelve will hold a high place, being, possibly, the heads over twelve great divisions of the spiritual Israel, the whole multitude of the redeemed being thus divided, like the literal Israel of old. We must remember that one throne was lost by him who was first called to it, and will be filled by another (See on x. 1. St. John vi. 70. and Acts i. 25, 26.).

29. "Shall receive an hundredfold." St. Mark and St. Luke both add words to show that this is to be understood of *this present* life: St. Mark adding the very important words "with persecutions" (See on St. Mark). Observe, our Lord would teach His apostles not to suppose that they alone should reach a high place in the kingdom of heaven. It is "*every one*" who has forsaken the blessings of earth for Christ's name's sake,—for Christ's sake "*and the Gospel's*" (St. Mark),—"for the kingdom of God's sake" (St. Luke),—who shall receive a rich reward here, and eternal life hereafter. "Godliness," St. Paul says, has "the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come" (1 Tim. iv. 8.). (See on v. 5. and 1 Cor. iii. 21, 22.)

30. "But many &c." Possibly our Lord thought of Judas Iscariot, as He spoke of the first being last. The words are a warning to all who have a high calling, high gifts, high privileges, how deep may be their fall. In the latter words—"the last first"—there is a warning against pride. For those who esteem themselves first in God's favour may find others, who seemed to them last placed above themselves. It is to enforce this latter truth that the following parable is spoken.

CHAPTER XX.

1 *Christ, by the similitude of the labourers in the vineyard, sheweth that God is debtor unto no man:* 17 *foretelleth His passion:* 20 *by answering the mother of Zebedee's children teacheth His disciples to be lowly:* 30 *and giveth two blind men their sight.*

FOR the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man *that is* an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard.

2 And when he had agreed with the labourers for a [2] penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard.

[2] *The Roman penny is the eighth part of an ounce, which after five shillings the ounce is seven pence halfpenny,* ch. 18. 28.

CHAPTER XX.

1.—16. The parable of the Labourers in the vineyard.

1. **"For."** This word closely connects this parable with the conversation at the close of the last chapter, and as the closing words of that conversation are repeated at the end of the parable (16.), we must look to them for a key to its general meaning. Its great object then is to show how the first may become last, by a proud or grudging spirit, and how the last may become first by God's grace and mercy. But we must go back to St. Peter's question, "What shall *we* have therefore?" (xix. 27.) for the full understanding of the object of the parable. That question, though lovingly answered with a promise of a rich recompence, was nevertheless the sign of a faulty spirit. It regarded God's rewards too much in the light of debts due for so much work done, instead of as free gifts,—whether greater or less, alike infinitely beyond our deservings. To correct this spirit, after the special promise to the Apostles, our Lord adds (xix. 29.) the wider promise that "*every one*," who gave up this world for Christ, should "inherit everlasting life:"—nay more, that some would reach a higher place than those for whom it was seemingly prepared. And then the parable enforces these truths, answering the spirit of St. Peter's question thus:—'God has called man to work in His vine-'yard, and has promised him his reward—"everlasting life" (xix. 29.). 'Is not this enough—more than enough? What if God, who surely may 'do what He will with His own, choose not to reckon, as thou wouldest, 'by the amount or value of the labour done, but give the same reward to 'such as seem to thee not to have earned it?' And what if 'those who 'have been longest called, and have laboured most, *by their over-estimate* '*of their own merits* come to be last instead of first; and, thinking they 'deserve the highest place, find themselves lowest in the favour of God?' This gives the general meaning of the parable.

"His vineyard." That is, God's church.

2. **"A penny a day."** The penny was worth sevenpence halfpenny of our money (See *Margin.*), and was the ordinary wage for a day's work. Some have felt a great difficulty in allowing that our Lord could speak of "everlasting life" under a figure which would seem to represent it as no more than the *wages* due for our service, instead of as the free "gift of God" (Rom. vi. 23.). This need not trouble any one, for we may consider the *amount* of the wages as a point only belonging to the outward framework of the parable, necessary to make the story natural and lifelike, and not

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1. "*Like unto a man.*" See *Note* on xi. 16.

A.D. 30. 3 And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace,

4 and said unto them; Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way.

5 Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise.

6 And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle?

7 They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, *that* shall ye receive.

8 So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them *their* hire, beginning from the last unto the first.

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to be pressed into the spiritual meaning. As to eternal life being represented *at all* under the figure of wages, we can only say that it is a common Scriptural expression to speak of it as the "reward" of our works. The real error is when the "reward" is "not reckoned of grace, but of "debt" (Rom. iv. 4.). Probably the agreeing of these first-called for their wages already points to that self-esteem and sense of merit, which afterwards displayed itself in their murmuring, and robbed them of that foremost place which they thought was their due.

3. **"Third hour."** That is, nine o'clock, the Jewish day being reckoned from sunrise, that is, on the average, from six in the morning.

"The marketplace." A fitting type of the world, with all its cares and noise and turmoil, out of which we are hired to labour in God's vineyard, called to do our work for God in His Church.

4. **"They went their way."** Not having made their agreement, like the first, but trusting to the householder's justice and goodness.

6. **"The eleventh hour."** It would be most unusual to hire a labourer at this hour, five o'clock, with only one hour of work to be done. Yet God is always hiring *His* labourers.

7. **"Because no man hath hired us."** See how little we can draw from this parable the dangerous error that it matters not at what time in men's lives they repent and turn to God, or rather that it matters not how long and how often they refuse God's invitation so that they accept it at last. If this had been Christ's meaning, He would have made the first called labourers refuse, and the householder go to the market-place again and again during the day, inviting the *same* men to come and work for him, while they again and again refused, preferring to stay idling or drinking, till only one hour of the day remained. This would be a true picture of many of us, who think to turn to God before we die. There is nothing like this in the parable. These men had not gone to work because *no one had asked them* till then. Who in this land has such an excuse as this?

8. **"Beginning from the last."** The order of the payment seems to shadow out the coming change of place between the first and last.

9 And when they came that *were hired* about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. A.D. 30.

10 But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny.

11 And when they had received *it*, they murmured against the goodman of the house,

12 saying, These last [2]have wrought *but* one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day.

[2] Or, *have continued one hour only.*

13 But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny?

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10. "Every man a penny." Understanding the "penny" to mean eternal life, it is not necessary to suppose the parable to declare that every man's reward will be *equal in* that eternal life. This would be contrary to many other passages. "Eternal life" is given to all who are saved. That is all here told us. Within that wide expression, what differences and degrees of bliss and of glory may exist! Probably each man's state of happiness will be exactly proportioned to his fitness for it. In that case the reward may well be spoken of as *one*. It is one and the same for all. But all cannot receive it equally. Like vessels of various size, all may be filled, but all not contain the same.

11. "They murmured." How could this be? How could those who received the reward murmur? Or how could those who were able to murmur receive the reward? No doubt in the spiritual application this would be impossible. Those who are saved cannot murmur; and those who murmur cannot be saved. But what is the object of the parable? Is it not to warn the Apostles against the very spirit of over-esteeming their own merits, which these murmurers showed, and of which they—the Apostles—were in danger? Is it not to teach them that to claim a larger reward on account of their greater labours, and to grudge to others a like reward with themselves, would bring them down from the highest place to the lowest? And how could this lesson be more strikingly given? It is foolish to stumble at the lesser points in which the parable and its spiritual interpretation may not closely fit, and so perhaps to lose the great general lesson. It is quite true the Apostles would not be able to display the faulty spirit which is rebuked in this parable, *after reaching heaven*. But they would never think this. The lesson was plain enough. That which the first-called labourers did in the parable, they were in danger of doing. In the story the labourers did it when they received their reward: in reality the Apostles could do it only when they looked forward to their reward. But the spirit is the same; and the answer it requires, and receives, is the same.

13. "Friend, I do thee no wrong:" &c. In reality all is so greatly beyond our deservings, that it would be indeed a most wicked presumption to claim a larger reward because we have laboured more than others. When we have done all those things which are commanded us (and who has done a thousandth part?), "we are unprofitable servants: we have "done that which was our duty to do" (St. Luke xvii. 10.), and no more.

A.D. 30. 14 Take *that* thine *is*, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee.

a Rom. 9. 21. 15 [a] Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with
b Deut. 15. 9. Prov. 23. 6. ch. 6. 23. mine own? [b] Is thine eye evil, because I am good?

c ch. 19. 30. d ch. 22. 14. 16 [c] So the last shall be first, and the first last: [d] for many be called, but few chosen.

e John 12. 12. 17 ¶ [e] And Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them,

f ch. 16. 21. 18 [f] Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and

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15. "Is thine eye evil." That is, envious.

16. "So the last shall be first, and the first last." The last,—that is, the last called, the last in privilege and opportunity of service,—these became first, having the same reward as the first, and not lessening that reward by their self-esteem or murmuring or envy. The first,—that is, the first called, the highest in privilege, the longest labouring in the vineyard,—these became last, their proud claims and envious discontent bringing upon them their master's displeasure, and proving them unworthy of his goodness. (Compare the Pharisee and the Publican St. Luke xviii. 9—14.).

"For many be called, but few chosen." This seems to point to the *rejection* of the murmuring labourers after all; as doubtless they would be rejected in the reality of God's dealings. The words seem suggested by the earlier part of the parable describing the calling of the labourers into the vineyard, and tell us that, although many are called into God's vineyard, yet, of these, many will by their conduct (like these murmuring labourers, and in other ways also,) lose their reward.

In explaining this parable the view which connects it with the conversation out of which it seems to have sprung has been kept in mind throughout. It may however be applied in other ways; namely, to all cases in which one man has spiritual advantages, either in point of time, or in respect of privileges and talents, over another. Thus it might be applied, nationally, to the Jews and Gentiles; the former having no right to boast themselves over the latter, or to grudge that they should be "fellow-heirs" (Eph. iii. 6.). It is possible that St. Matthew was inspired to record this parable, as writing for the Jewish Christians, to whom such an application would be specially instructive. It may also be applied to Christians who have served God all their lives, as compared with those who have only obeyed His call to work for Him late in life; though not without the caution given above upon verse 7.

17—19. Our Lord again foretells His sufferings.

St. Mark x. 32—34. St. Luke xviii. 31—34.

18. "Behold, we go up" &c. Four times our Lord distinctly foretold His sufferings and death to His disciples. This is the third of these prophecies. (The others are in xvi. 21. xvii. 22, 23. and xxvi. 2.) No

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17. "*Going up to Jerusalem.*" See on St. Mark x. 32.

unto the scribes, and they shall condemn Him to death, A.D. 30.

19 [g] and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify *Him:* and the third day He shall rise again. [g] ch. 27. 2. Mark 15. 1, 16, &c. Luke 23. 1. John 18. 28, &c. Acts 3. 13.

20 ¶ Then came to Him the mother of [h] Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping *Him*, and desiring a certain thing of Him. [h] ch. 4. 21.

21 And He said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto Him, Grant that these my two sons [i] may sit, the one on Thy right hand, and the other on the left, in Thy kingdom. [i] ch. 19. 28.

22 But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of [k] the cup that [k] ch. 26. 39, 42. Mark 14. 36. Luke 22. 42. John 18. 11.

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doubt our Lord may have spoken of His coming passion on other occasions, but these were doubtless the more solemn and important declarations concerning it. It may be noticed that St. Matthew alone records that He foretold the *manner* of His death, namely Crucifixion. St. Luke adds that the disciples "understood none of these things."

20—28. Request of the Mother of James and John.

St. Mark x. 35—45.

20. "The mother of Zebedee's children." This was Salome (Compare xxvii. 56. with St. Mark xv. 40. xvi. 1.). St. Mark describes the two Apostles themselves as making the request here recorded. They plainly made it through their mother, who spoke for them what perhaps they had not courage to speak for themselves.

21. "Grant that these my two sons may sit," &c. This request was no doubt founded upon Christ's promise of the "twelve thrones" (xix. 28.), and encouraged by the privileges granted to St. James and St. John, who, with St. Peter, enjoyed a special place in our Lord's favour, the younger of them—St. John—being blessed with peculiar marks of love. Still it was a presumptuous request, and showed a spirit of ambition and pride, even though the demand was not based (at least openly) upon the merits of those who made it, like St. Peter's question, "What shall we have therefore?" (xix. 27.). Moreover it showed a great ignorance of the true way to reach the highest places in Christ's kingdom. They thought they had a claim to this preeminence. They had yet to learn that the path to glory was through suffering. "The flesh," says Luther, "ever seeks to be glorified before it is crucified."

22. "Ye know not what ye ask." We see by our Lord's answer that He looked upon the request as made by the sons rather than by their mother, all the remainder of His words being addressed to the former. They knew not indeed what they asked. They had little idea what fearful honours they would have obtained, had their desire been granted. They little dreamt that they were really asking for the crosses of the two thieves, for that the surest way to be glorified with Christ was to suffer with Him.

A.D. 30. I shall drink of, and to be baptized with [l] the bap-
[l] Luke 12. 50. tism that I am baptized with? They say unto Him, We are able.

[m] Acts 12. 2. Rom. 8. 17. 2 Cor. 1. 7. Rev. 1. 9. 23 And he saith unto them, [m] Ye shall drink indeed of My cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on My right hand,
[n] ch. 25. 34. and on My left, is not Mine to [n] give, but *it shall be given to them* for whom it is prepared of My Father.

[o] Luke 22. 24, 25. 24 [o] And when the ten heard *it*, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren.

25 But Jesus called them *unto Him*, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them.

[p] 1 Pet. 5. 3. [q] ch. 23. 11. Mark 9. 35. 26 But [p] it shall not be so among you: but [q] whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;

"Baptized with the baptism." We are all familiar with the "cup" as an image of suffering from our Lord's use of the figure in Gethsemane. The "baptism" is a more unusual expression. As baptism was commonly practised in primitive times by the immersion—or dipping under the water—of the whole person, so this question means, 'Are ye able to go 'down as deep as I must go under the waters of suffering?'

"We are able." So said St. Peter, promising to die with Christ rather than deny Him, yet he denied Him three times. And the sons of Zebedee, for a while at least, "forsook Him and fled" (xxvi. 56.). But all three were afterwards given by the Holy Spirit the power which in themselves they lacked, and were able to drink of Christ's cup.

23. "Ye shall" &c. St. James was the first among the Apostles to receive the crown of martyrdom (See Acts xii. 1, 2.): St. John lived longest to suffer for his Master; and, though not a martyr in *act*, was a martyr in *will*, dying daily for Christ (See 1 Cor. xv. 31.).

"Not Mine to give, but." The words "*It shall be given to them*," following the "but" in this verse, are not in the original (as may be seen by their being printed in Italics), and were put in by our translators to fill up the sense. Perhaps it would have been better to have omitted "it shall be given," and then our Lord's words would be, "not Mine to "give but to them for whom it is prepared of My Father." The words filled in by our translators *seem* to imply that the boon asked will not be given by Christ at all; whereas the true sense is simply that it is not Christ's to give to whom He will, but only to those for whom it is prepared, and (it may be added) who are, by God's grace, prepared for it.

25. "Ye know" &c. This lesson is spoken to *all* the Apostles, who needed, as the three chief ones had already shown, a lesson of humility.

26. "Your minister." That is, 'your servant,' as afterwards "to be

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26. "*Your minister*." There is a distinction to be drawn between the word translated "minister" in this verse and that translated "servant" in the next. The

27 [r] and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: A.D. 30.

28 [s] even as the [t] Son of man came not to be ministered unto, [u] but to minister, and [x] to give His life a ransom [y] for many.

29 ¶ And as they departed from Jericho, a great multitude followed Him.

[r] ch. 18. 4. [s] John 13. 4. [t] Phil. 2. 7. [u] Luke 22. 27. John 13. 14. [x] Is. 53. 10, 11. Dan. 9. 24, 26. John 11. 51, 52. 1 Tim. 2. 6. Titus 2. 14. 1 Pet. 1. 19. [y] ch. 26. 28. Rom. 5. 15, 19. Heb. 9. 28.

"ministered unto" and "to minister" (28.) mean 'to be served' and 'to serve' (See iv. 11.).

28. "Even as the Son of man came" &c. This same lesson—that namely of humility as taught by the example of Christ—is nobly given by St. Paul in Phil. ii. 5—11, which is the best comment on this verse.

"A ransom for many." In these words our Lord distinctly states the great doctrine of the Atonement. A 'ransom' is a payment made in order to set another free. The word implies the same truth as the word 'redemption,' which signifies 'buying back.' The 'ransom which Christ 'pays in order to redeem' man is "His life." The words "for many" do not contradict the truth that Christ died *for all*, as distinctly declared by St. Paul, who uses the very words, "who gave Himself a ransom for all" (1 Tim. ii. 6.), and who expresses the same truth in other places (See Rom. v. 18.). "Many" is however used in several places in the same way as here. Thus our Lord speaks of His Blood as "shed for *many*" (xxvi. 28.). In the last two verses also of Is. liii., after having in verse 6 said that "the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us *all*," the prophet speaks of Christ as justifying "*many*," and bearing "the sin of *many*." This latter expression is quoted in Hebr. ix. 28. In Rom. v. 15 and 19 St. Paul speaks of the fruit of Christ's merits as abounding unto "many." But in this passage "many" is used in contrast to "one," and that it there signifies 'all' is plain, by the actual use of "all" in the middle of the passage (verse 18.). The truth is, both expressions are true, and either may be used according to the purpose of the passage. Christ's death was, in its purpose and merit and power, for *all;* in its practical efficacy for salvation, which depends on man's acceptance of it, it is for *many*, even for that "great multitude," which no man can number, of those who shall be saved.

29—34. Healing of two blind men near Jericho.

St. Mark x. 46—52. St. Luke xviii. 35—43.

29. "As they departed from Jericho." In St. Luke's account this miracle took place as they *approached* Jericho. There is also another difference to be noticed. St. Mark and St. Luke speak of only *one* blind man, the former giving his name—Bartimæus, while St. Matthew speaks of *two*. This latter difference creates no great difficulty, being precisely

former means one who attends or waits upon another in any way: the latter is a less honourable term, and means simply a bond-servant or slave. The word "minister" is not commonly used now in the wider scriptural sense, being narrowed into the sense of one who serves in sacred things.

29—34. The particulars of this miracle of healing the blind are reserved for the fuller account in St. Mark. See also on ix. 27—31.

A.D. 30. 30 And, behold, [z] two blind men sitting by the
[z] ch. 9. 27. way side, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, *Thou* Son of David.

31 And the multitude rebuked them, because they should hold their peace: but they cried the more, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, *Thou* Son of David.

32 And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will ye that I shall do unto you?

33 They say unto Him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened.

34 So Jesus had compassion *on them*, and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed Him.

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the same as that we met with before in the history of the demoniacs of Gadara (See on viii. 28.). Doubtless Bartimæus was well known, as the way St. Mark speaks of him—"blind Bartimæus"—would imply, and his companion was less noticeable. But the difficulty as to the *time* of the performance of the miracle is one which has perplexed many. It is a point *in itself* wholly unimportant. But, since many are distressed at a difference upon even so trivial a matter in the inspired histories, it has been suggested that possibly Bartimæus first cried to our Lord as He went towards Jericho (this being noticed only by St. Luke), but that he was not healed then, Jesus going on and paying His visit at the house of Zacchæus. Then upon our Lord's leaving Jericho Bartimæus was waiting for Him, together with another blind man who had joined him meanwhile, and then the miracle took place. The only difficulty then would be that St. Luke relates *the whole* of his account as if it took place at once, as Jesus went to Jericho. But this is easy to understand, for, having named the blind man's first petition, he might naturally go on at once to complete the story, instead of breaking it in two. [We have an instance of this in the very next chapter of this Gospel (verse 20.), where it *appears* as though the fig-tree which Jesus cursed withered away instantly, and that the disciples saw it wither then and there; whereas we find from St. Mark (xi. 20.) that it was not till the next day that the effect of the cursing was seen.] Of course, if the above be a true account, we are to understand that St. Matthew and St. Mark only relate what took place on the *second* occasion of the blind man's cry for help.

"Jericho." A rich and beautiful city, in a most fertile plain abounding with palm-trees, about 18 miles North-east from Jerusalem, in the Tribe of Benjamin (See Map.). It is now a miserable village. The road from Jericho to Jerusalem, along which our Lord is now about to pass, is very wild, being in the midst of rocks and mountains. It was on that road that our Lord laid the scene of the parable of the Good Samaritan (St. Luke x. 30.).

A.D. 30.

CHAPTER XXI.

1 *Christ rideth into Jerusalem upon an ass,* 12 *driveth the buyers and sellers out of the temple,* 17 *curseth the fig tree,* 23 *putteth to silence the priests and elders,* 28 *and rebuketh them by the similitude of the two sons,* 33 *and the husbandmen who slew such as were sent unto them.*

AND when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto [a] the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples,

[a] Zech. 14. 4.

CHAPTER XXI.

1—11. Christ rideth into Jerusalem on the ass's colt.

St. Mark xi. 1—11. St. Luke xix. 28—40. St. John xii. 12—19.

1. "**Bethphage.**" A village probably very near Bethany (with which place it is coupled in St. Mark and St. Luke), on the Eastern slope of the Mount of Olives, that is on the farther side from Jerusalem. On the Eastern side of Jerusalem, at the foot of the hill beneath the Walls, is the Valley of Jehoshaphat, through which, from North to South, runs the brook Kedron. Directly you cross the Kedron the ascent of the Mount of Olives begins, and over the top of the hill lies the footpath to Bethany, which is nearly two miles from the city (See Map.). There are no remains of any place answering to Bethphage, and its position cannot be known at all certainly. Some, judging from certain Jewish records, have imagined Bethphage to be the name of some scattered houses in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, almost an out-lying suburb or district of Jerusalem.

CHAPTER XXI.

1. "*When they drew nigh unto Jerusalem.*" There is a difference in the *order* in which the events now about to be considered are recorded by the different Evangelists. We learn from St. John (xii. 1.) that our Lord came to Bethany "six "days before the passover," which would be on the previous Sabbath, though possibly on the Friday evening, from the sunset on which day the Sabbath would begin. It was plainly on either the Friday or the Saturday evening that the anointing by Mary, related in this place by St. John, took place. This anointing St. Matthew and St. Mark both relate *apparently* as happening two days before the Passover, that is, not till the Wednesday in the holy week. But if we examine the manner in which these accounts are introduced (St. Matt. xxvi. 6. and St. Mark xiv. 3.), we shall see that the *time* of the occurrence is not given in either case, though, if we had not St. John's account, we should certainly conclude that it was at the later date. We may suppose the two earlier Evangelists to go back to this event, and insert it where they do, as connected with the covetousness of Judas Iscariot, whose betrayal of our Lord immediately follows it. [That these three accounts are accounts of the same event, and that this is a different event from that related by St. Luke (vii. 37—50.), See *Note* on xxvi. 6.] Another difficulty occurs as to the cleansing of the Temple, St. Matthew and St. Luke relating it as following upon the triumphal entry into Jerusalem, St. Mark as occurring the next day. Here it is probably best to follow St. Mark's account, as being the more minute and apparently accurate. If we do so, we shall believe that on the day of the riding into Jerusalem (our Palm-Sunday) Jesus only went into the Temple, and "looked round about "upon all things" (St. Mark xi. 11.), carrying out the act which was called for by what He then beheld on His visit the next day. In that case, we must suppose St. Matthew and St. Luke, in naming our Lord's first visit and the look of grief with which He saw the Temple misused, to have gone on at once to relate the end of the story, without pausing and breaking their history by stating that the actual cleansing took place the next day. (See on xx. 29. and verse 20 of this chapter.)

A.D. 30. 2 saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose *them*, and bring *them* unto Me.

3 And if any *man* say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them.

4 All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying,

b Isai. 62. 11. 5 [b] **Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.** Zech. 9. 9.

6 And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them,

c 2 Kin. 9. 13. 7 and brought the ass, and the colt, and [c] put on them their clothes, and they set *Him* thereon.

8 And a very great multitude spread their gar-

d See Lev. 23. 40. ments in the way; [d] others cut down branches from the trees, and strawed *them* in the way.

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2. "Ye shall find." Thus showing His divine foreknowledge.

3. "The Lord hath need of them." It is plain from this that the owner of the ass was a believer in Christ, and would understand who was meant by "the Lord." (Compare "The Master saith" xxvi. 18.) We may notice that Jesus, who generally calls Himself by His humblest title—"the Son of Man,"—here, being about to enter Jerusalem as a king, makes use of a title of authority—"the Lord."

5. "Tell ye the daughter of Sion." "Daughter" signifies any inhabitant; so that the prophet's words mean, 'Tell ye the people of Sion.' Sion was the hill forming the South part of Jerusalem, on which stood king David's palace (See Map of Jerusalem), and is sometimes used for the whole city.

"And a colt." The word "and" here should be understood as if it were 'and that': the whole sentence being 'sitting upon an ass, and 'that a colt the foal of an ass.' This was most literally fulfilled, Jesus riding upon the young ass, while the mother probably followed. Asses were of a larger sort in the East than with us, and they were ridden by kings and judges in time of peace. Horses were not so much used, and were chiefly used for war. The next verse in the prophecy of Zechariah speaks of the cutting off of the chariots and horses, as a sign that the reign was to be one of peace. Thus the prophecy foretold Christ's entry into the royal city 1. as a King, and 2. as a King of peace. St. John tells us that the disciples did not perceive the meaning of Christ's act, or the fulfilment of the prophecy, until after He was "glorified";—that is, probably not until the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, who brought all things to their remembrance (See St. John xiv. 26.).

8. "Spread their garments in the way." This is an Eastern way of showing honour. The "trees" here spoken of were "palm-trees"

9 And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, **Hosanna** to the Son of David: [e] **Blessed** *is* **He that cometh in the name of the Lord**; Hosanna in the highest. Ps. 118. 25, 26.

10 [f] And when He was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this?

11 And the multitude said, This is Jesus [g] the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.

A.D. 30.

[e] ch. 23. 39.

[f] Mark 11. 15. Luke 19. 45. John 2. 13, 15.

[g] ch. 2. 23. Luke 7. 16. John 6. 14. & 7. 40. & 9. 17.

(St. John), the large fan-like leaves of which were much used in processions. From this act the day has received the popular name of 'Palm-Sunday.'

9. "Hosanna." This word means 'Save, we pray,' and is the beginning in the Hebrew of the 25th verse of the 118th Psalm, which, together with the 26th verse, formed a sort of burden or response repeated frequently by the people during the singing of the proper Psalms (the 113th to the 118th) both at the Passover (See on xxvi. 17.) and on the Feast of Tabernacles, on which latter occasion branches of palm or other trees were waved. Thus the words came to be associated with the carrying of palm-branches, which themselves even used to be sometimes called 'hosannas.' It may be well to name that the Feast of Tabernacles was not, of course, at the time of Christ's entry into Jerusalem (which was just before the Passover), but in the autumn, when all the harvest had been gathered in. Still the same Psalms, with the same burden or response, being used on both occasions, the words, as well as the carrying of branches, came to be regarded as the fitting expression of joy and triumph. The verses above referred to (Ps. cxviii. 25, 26.) are as follows: —"Save now, I beseech Thee, O LORD! O LORD, I beseech Thee, send "now prosperity. Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the LORD: "we have blessed you out of the house of the LORD."

Let us try to picture the wonderful scene. Jesus is slowly riding towards the city along the rocky road that winds round the southern slopes of Olivet. There is a multitude following Him from Bethany, having gone out to see Him and to see Lazarus whom He had raised from the dead. And there is a multitude streaming out from Jerusalem to meet Him, having heard of His approach. And before Him, as He moves along, they are strewing their robes, and scattering the green branches, to make a carpet for Him to pass over. And behind and before they are waving the long palm-leaves, emblems of triumph, in the air, and singing their festival songs of glad Hosannas. And He passes on,—meek, grave, mournful. It is a scene of triumph, but He knows He is even now drawing nigh to Calvary. He accepts the royal homage, but He sees before Him for His throne the cross. And now as the road winds on, and rises over a little shoulder of the hill, there breaks on His sight, outspread before Him, the beautiful city, with its glorious temple crowning its towers and its walls, and He pauses to gaze. And as the tears run down, breaks forth that infinitely touching lament, —"If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things "which belong unto thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes" (St. Luke xix. 42.). And so He journeys on.

A.D. 30. 12 ¶ [i]And Jesus went into the temple of God,
[i] John 2. 15. and cast out all them that sold and bought in the
[k] Deut. 14. 25. temple, and overthrew the tables of the [k]money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves,
13 and said unto them, It is written, **My house**
[l] Jer. 7. 11. **shall be called the house of prayer**; [l]but ye have made it a den of thieves. Is. 56. 7.

12—16. The second cleansing of the Temple.

St. Mark xi. 15—18. St. Luke xix. 45, 46.

Compare the first cleansing of the Temple, St. John ii. 13—17.

12. "**Jesus went into the temple**" &c. Both the beginning and the ending of our Lord's public ministry were marked by the same act of authority. It was now just three years since, at the first passover of the four embraced within that momentous period, Jesus performed a similar act to that here narrated. The former one is given only by St. John.

"**Them that sold and bought in the temple.**" This buying and selling was of the animals to be used in sacrifice, and by "the temple" is here doubtless meant the outer court of the temple, called the "Court "of the Gentiles." It would be a great convenience to those about to offer sacrifices, or other offerings, to be able to provide themselves on the spot. But our Lord shows that no amount of convenience can justify the desecration of God's house.

"**Moneychangers.**" The annual payment made by every Jew to the service of the Temple, which was a half-shekel (See on xvii. 24.), was to be paid only in Jewish coin. Doubtless Jews coming up to the passover from various lands would often possess only foreign money, and would want it exchanged in order to pay the half-shekel.

13. "**A den of thieves.**" There is a sterner reproof here than on the earlier occasion, when the buyers and sellers were only said to be making God's house a "house of merchandise" (St. John.). Doubtless unjust dealings had been practised by the buyers and sellers, and unjust profits made. Probably too the money-changers may have charged too much for the exchange. We have here a practical comment on the 8th. Commandment, which is rightly explained in our Catechism as "to be true and just in all our dealings."

We must not pass over the spiritual significance of this act of our Lord. It teaches us with what zeal and sternness we should cleanse the spiritual temple—whether the Church of Christ itself, which St. Peter compares to a "spiritual house" (1 St. Peter ii. 5. Compare 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17. and Eph. ii. 20—22.), or each separate member of the Church, which is also a scriptural application of the figure (1 Cor. vi. 19.),—from everything that can defile.

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12. This cleansing of the Temple is recorded by the first three Evangelists alone, the other, which took place three years before, by St. John alone. Some have on this account argued that all four accounts must refer to the same event, either the three Evangelists, or the one, having related it quite out of its natural place. This it is utterly impossible to believe. (See *Note* on xiv. 15.)

For fuller comments on this action see on St. John ii. 13—17.

14 And the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple; and He healed them. A.D. 30.

15 And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that He did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David; they were sore displeased,

16 and said unto Him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, **Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise?** Ps. 8. 2.

17 ¶ And He left them, and went out of the city into [m] Bethany; and He lodged there. m Mark 11. 11. John 11. 18.

18 Now in the morning as He returned into the city, He hungered.

19 And when He saw [2] a fig tree in the way, He [2] Gr. *one fig tree.*

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14. "The blind and the lame came to Him" &c. How strange and how beautiful is the contrast of this love and gentleness with the sternness described in the preceding verses.

15. "The children crying in the temple." Children are no more afraid of Jesus than the blind and the lame. He is all sternness to the sinners: He is all love to the lowly and helpless. The children's Hosannas are, as it were, an echo of those of the day before, in which they had doubtless joined.

16. "Have ye never read" &c. The words of the 8th Psalm are in two other places applied to Christ in the New Testament (1 Cor. xv. 27. Hebr. ii. 6. and *perhaps* also Eph. i. 22.). Thus it is declared to be one of the psalms specially prophetic of the Messiah; and the second verse, here quoted, though no doubt fulfilled in other ways, had yet a special and intended fulfilment in the Hosannas of the children in the Temple. Another fulfilment is suggested in the Collect for the Innocents' Day.

17—22. The barren fig-tree cursed.

St. Mark xi. 12—14. 19—26.

17. "He lodged there." Probably in the house of Lazarus and Mary and Martha. This family is never mentioned in the first three Gospels, except in the exceedingly beautiful passage in which St. Luke (x. 38—42.) describes the different conduct and character of the two sisters. Concerning Lazarus there is perfect silence. After this night Jesus appears to have passed the nights until His death on the Mount of Olives (See St. Luke xxi. 37.).

18. "In the morning." This was the Monday in Holy-Week.

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14. "*The blind and the lame.*" It is not clear whether this healing took place on the Sunday, when Jesus had, as we have seen (See *Note* on 1.), only looked round, doubtless with a look of sadness and rebuke, upon all things in the Temple, or on the Monday, after He had finally driven the buyers and sellers out.

17. "*Bethany.*" See on "Bethphage," verse 1.

A.D. 30. came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away.

20 And when the disciples saw *it*, they mar-

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19. "Nothing thereon, but leaves only." Certainly our Lord could have told, had He pleased, that there was no fruit on the tree without going up to it, but the fact would not have been so manifest to others, and the going to look for fruit was but a part of the great *parable of action* which we have in this story. Indeed it may be said that this is only the Parable of the Barren Fig-tree (St. Luke xiii. 6—9.) taught by act instead of word. St. Mark says "the time of figs was not yet"; and here there seems a difficulty: for, if not, why did Jesus go to the tree as if expecting to find figs? And why, not finding the fruit, of which it was not yet the season, did He pronounce the sentence against the tree? It seems that at the time of the Passover (in April) there would be neither ripe fruit *nor leaves* on a fig tree, and moreover that the fruit being formed the year before, and ripening soon after the coming out of the leaves, when there were leaves it would not be unlikely that there would be fruit also. Thus this tree, in putting out leaves before the rest, gave a promise of early fruit,—a promise not fulfilled. So that "it was punished, not for being without fruit, but "for proclaiming by the voice of those leaves that it had fruit,—not "for being barren, but for being false" (*Trench.*).

This fig-tree is a likeness 1. of the Jewish people, who, with all their high professions and early promise, yet, when God came seeking fruit, were found barren, and suffered the condemnation of the son in the parable, who said, "I go, sir; and went not" (30.): 2. of any one who has profession without practice.

"Let no fruit" &c. Judicial barrenness is the fit punishment for those who will not bear good fruit, even as judicial blindness for those who do "not like to retain God in their knowledge" (Rom. i. 28.). The trial of Israel was over. "*These three years*" had the Lord of the vineyard come seeking fruit on the tree which He had planted of old, and found none. It had been let alone till the limit of forbearance was reached, and now the decree must go forth, "Cut it down." Yet the spiritual sentence upon Israel is, by God's mercy, less hopeless than the sentence upon the barren tree. That would never again put forth leaf or shoot. But the branches of Israel, "if they abide not still "in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graff them in again" (Rom. xi. 23.).

This is Christ's only miracle of pure destruction; for the destruction of the herd of swine was not a miracle, but an event which followed upon a miracle of mercy. Had we no such miracle as this, might we not think only of the "goodness," and forget the "severity" of God? (See Romans xi. 22.) Yet "Christ's miracles of mercy were "unnumbered, and on men: His miracle of judgment was but one, "and on a tree" (*Trench.*).

20. "When the disciples saw it." From St. Mark we learn that this was not till the next morning. St. Matthew here gathers up the whole story in one, bringing the beginning and end of it together, the

velled, saying, How soon is the fig tree withered away! A.D. 30.

21 Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, [o] If ye have faith, and [p] doubt not, ye shall not only do this *which is done* to the fig tree, [q] but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done.

[o] ch. 17. 20. Luke 17. 6.
[p] James 1. 6.
[q] 1 Cor. 13. 2.

22 And [r] all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.

[r] ch. 7. 7. Luke 11. 9. James 5. 16. 1 John 3. 22. & 5. 14.

23 ¶ And when He was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto Him as He was teaching, and [s] said, By what authority doest Thou these things? and who gave Thee this authority?

[s] Exod. 2. 14. Acts 4. 7. & 7. 27.

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better to present it in its completeness at one glance (See on xx. 29. and *Note* on 1.). Jesus and His disciples would doubtless pass the fig-tree in going out to the Mount of Olives in the evening, but, as it would be then dark, they would not see the effect of the sentence pronounced upon it till the next morning (the Tuesday.).

22. **"In prayer, believing."** Prayer is the outward frame of faith: and faith is the inward soul of prayer. The power of prayer lies in "believing." But believing what? That our prayers must certainly be granted? No: in believing that God will do what is best. The prayer that says not "as Thou wilt" is no prayer of faith. Therefore the words "thou shalt receive" must be taken with the limit which faith lays down;—"thou shalt receive," *if* it be for thy good and for God's glory.

23—27. Our Lord questioned as to His authority.

St. Mark xi. 27—33. St. Luke xx. 1—8.

23. **"By what authority."** If we are right in accepting St. Mark's account as giving the fuller details of the *time* in this portion of the sacred narrative (See *Note* on 1.), then this questioning appears to have taken place on the day after that on which our Lord finally drove out of the temple those who had roused His holy indignation on His previous visit. That first visit was on Palm-Sunday, the cleansing of the Temple from the buyers and sellers on the Monday, and this questioning therefore on the Tuesday (Compare St. Mark xi. 11, 12, 15, 19, and 27.). The question "By what authority doest Thou these "things?" naturally refers to this act. In like manner on the former like occasion the Jews ask, "What sign showest Thou?" (St. John ii. 18.). The act was one which none would have ventured to perform except one armed with special authority, or able to prove His divine mission by signs and miracles.

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21. "*If ye have faith*," &c. See on xvii. 20. and St. Luke xvii. 6.

A.D. 30. 24 And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell Me, I in like wise will tell you by what authority I do these things.

25 The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; He will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him?

26 But if we shall say, Of men; we fear the people; [t] for all hold John as a prophet.

[t] ch. 14. 5. Mark 6. 20.

27 And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell. And He said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

28 ¶ But what think ye? A *certain* man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to day in my vineyard.

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25. "The baptism of John," &c. The true answer to this counter-question of our Lord would give the true answer to the question of the chief priests and elders. If John the Baptist were sent from heaven, then they must believe him; but then they must believe Christ's authority to be from heaven too; for John bare record that He was "the Son of God" (St. John i. 34.).

"If we shall say," &c. This reasoning of the chief priests and elders is much to be noted, as showing their state of mind. There is no sort of care as to what is *true*. They do not seek *truth*. Their only care is as to what is *safe* and *prudent* to answer. And, as they do not really wish to know the truth, Christ tells it not to them. It would be only casting pearls before swine.

28—32. Parable of the Two Sons.

28. "What think ye?" This parable is closely connected with the last conversation. It is the beginning of that course of parables and other sayings, in which our Lord pronounces most severely the condemnation of the self-righteous Jews, and strives to lead them to some knowledge of their true state of sin and danger. It was this exposure of their real character which roused them—not to repentance, for their hearts were hardened past that,—but to that pitch of hatred and anger, which, in accordance with the "determinate counsel and "foreknowledge of God" (Acts ii. 23.), led them at last to stain their hands in the Lord's most holy Blood.

"Two sons." These represent two classes *among the Jews*, as we see by verse 31, and of course also the two classes of persons who at all times answer to these. If we had not our Lord's words to explain this (in 31 and 32.), we might not unnaturally have supposed the elder son to represent the Gentiles, and the younger the Jews, as indeed some

29 He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went. A.D. 30.

30 And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I *go*, sir: and went not.

31 Whether of them twain did the will of *his* father? They say unto Him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, [u] Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. [u] Luke 7. 29, 50.

32 For [x] John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: [y] but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen *it*, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him. [x] ch. 3. 1, &c. [y] Luke 3. 12, 13.

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commentators have done. But this contrast comes out, not in this, but in the next parable.

29. "I will not." The son who thus answers represents "the publicans and the harlots," bold, open, wilful, transgressors of God's law; yet, inasmuch as they know that they are so, more likely to be brought to repentance.

30. "I go, sir." This is the answer of the Scribes and Pharisees. There is abundant profession. They are even zealous of God's law. Yet, fancying perhaps, in their ignorance of its true requirements, that they are the only ones who really obey it, their pride and self-righteousness is such that they see not their own need of repentance, and therefore obey not the call to it.

31. The first." Probably those to whom our Lord put the question had no idea how He was about to apply this parable. But, even if they suspected that it might tell against themselves, there was no way of avoiding the answer *this* time. They could not now say "We cannot "tell." Then does Christ pronounce the solemn sentence, so astounding as it must have sounded in the ears of men who "trusted in "themselves that they were righteous, and despised others" (St. Luke xviii. 9.).

"Verily I say unto you," &c. Let us mark what Christ said. He did *not* say that "the publicans and the harlots"—that is, the worst and lowest of the people—were better than the moral law-observing, though self-satisfied, Pharisees. He did *not* say that it was better to say "I will not" to God's command, than to say "I go, sir," without really going. What He *did* say was that those who refuse to obey God's call, *but afterwards repent*, are better than those who profess to obey but never go beyond profession.

32. "In the way of righteousness." That is, teaching and practising that very righteousness which you profess to obey.

"When ye had seen it." That is, when ye had seen the repentance of "the publicans and the harlots,"—when ye had witnessed the plain fruits of the blessedness of John's preaching.

A.D. 30.

33 ¶ Hear another parable: There was a certain
z Ps. 80. 9. Cant. 8. 11. Isai. 5. 1. Jer. 2. 21. householder, z which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and
a ch. 25. 14, 15. built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and
b Cant. 8. 11, 12. a went into a far country:

c 2 Chron. 24. 21. & 36. 16. Neh. 9. 26. ch. 5. 12. & 23. 34, 37. Acts 7. 52. 1 Thess. 2. 15. Heb. 11. 36, 37. 34 and when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, b that they might receive the fruits of it.

35 c And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another.

33—46. Parable of the wicked husbandmen.

St. Mark xii. 1—12. St. Luke xx. 9—19.

33. "A vineyard." This is a very frequent image of the Jewish people in the Old Testament. Perhaps the two most familiar passages in which it occurs are the 80th Psalm, and the beginning of Isai. v. Perhaps it would be more correct to say that the vineyard is an image of God's kingdom (See 43.), manifested to the world of old in the Jewish people, but now in the Christian Church. Else it could not be said that God would let out the vineyard to others (41.). By the hedge and the winepress and the tower we are probably to understand simply what is expressed in Isaiah (v. 4.), when God says, "What could have "been done more to My vineyard, that I have not done in it?" When complete, the vineyard was "let out" to "husbandmen," who were to pay their rent in kind, by delivering to the owner a certain proportion of the produce. These "husbandmen" were the Jews as a people,—the rulers and the teachers first, as most responsible, but not shutting out any, for each in his place was bound to tend God's vineyard; even as each member of the Church now is bound to seek the welfare of the whole body.

"Went into a far country." This, being spoken of God in His dealings with the Jewish people, must signify His *seeming* to leave them, as He may be said to have done when, having given His law by Moses, and brought them to the promised land, He ceased to reveal His will so directly, leaving the people to their trial, only raising up from time to time His prophets to warn them and arouse them to their duty (See on "Straightway took his journey" xxv. 15.).

34. "The time of the fruit." This is, whensoever God's dealings and mercies should have wrought their due effect upon us,—whensoever He might justly look for the fruits of righteousness in His people. Or perhaps it rather means any time when God by His visible dealings makes us conscious of His demand of such fruit at our hands (See on xviii. 23.).

"His servants." That is, His prophets,—those who were specially sent with His messages to His people.

35. "The husbandmen took his servants," &c. So it is written of the saints under the old covenant: "Others had trial of cruel mockings "and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: they were "stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the "sword" (Hebr. xi. 36, 37.).

36 Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. A.D. 30.

37 But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son.

38 But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, [c]This is the heir; [d]come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance.

39 [e]And they caught him, and cast *him* out of the vineyard, and slew *him*.

40 When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?

41 They say unto Him, [f]He will miserably destroy those wicked men, [g]and will let out *his* vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons.

[c] Ps. 2. 8. Heb. 1. 2.
[d] Ps. 2. 2. ch. 26. 3. & 27. 1. John 11. 53. Acts 4. 27.
[e] ch. 26. 50, &c. Mark 14. 46, &c. Luke 22. 54, &c. John 18. 12, &c. Acts 2. 23.
[f] Luke 21. 24. Heb. 2. 3.
[g] Acts 13. 46. & 15. 7. & 18. 6. & 28. 28. Rom. 9, & 10, & 11.

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37. "**His son.**" "One son, his well-beloved" (St. Mark.). In the words "They will reverence my son," God is pictured as using human thought and language, after the common practice of holy Scripture. Of course God knew perfectly that the Jews would *not* reverence His Son, but it is the outer aspect of God's dealings which is represented in the parable, and God dealt with the Jews (as He always deals with all) as with those whose will was free to choose or to refuse.

38. "**This is the heir.**" God hath "appointed" His Son "heir of all "things" (Hebr. i. 2.); that is, in His *Human* nature, and as King over His heavenly kingdom, the Church.

"**Come, let us kill him.**" So the Jews had already said, for after the raising of Lazarus, which was of course before this time, they "took "counsel together for to put Him to death" (St. John xi. 53.). Thus does He reveal to them their secret murderous thoughts. How perfectly is Joseph a type of Christ, when his brethren say, "Come now therefore, "and let us slay him" (Gen. xxxvii. 20.).

"**Let us seize on his inheritance.**" "The inheritance shall be ours" (St. Mark). The Jews dreaded nothing more than the loss of their national privileges; and when Christ came to make the Church Catholic instead of national,—free to all instead of confined to one people,—they rebelled at the idea. They would have kept the inheritance for their own, if they could.

39. "**Cast him out.**" Mark in these words a prophecy of Christ that He should suffer "without the gate" (Heb. xiii. 12.).

41. "**He will miserably destroy.**" Besides the mere rejection of the Jews, may we not here see a prophecy of the awful destruction which befel Jerusalem within forty years from this time? (See xxiv. 21.)

"**Other husbandmen.**" Namely, the Christian Church, now the earthly embodiment of God's kingdom.

"**Which shall render him the fruits.**" Yet they too may become

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41. "*They say unto Him.*" In St. Mark and St. Luke the following words *appear* to be spoken by our Lord, but we must there understand that He drew them from His hearers, and so adopted them.

A.D. 30.

42 Jesus saith unto them, [i] Did ye never read in the scriptures, **The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?**

[i] Isai. 28. 16. Acts 4. 11. Eph. 2. 20. 1 Pet. 2. 6, 7. Ps. 118. 22, 23.

[k] ch. 8. 12.

43 Therefore say I unto you, [k] The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

[l] Isai. 8. 14, 15. Zech. 12. 3. Rom. 9. 33. 1 Pet. 2. 8. [m] Isai. 60. 12. Dan. 2. 44.

44 And whosoever [l] shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, [m] it will grind him to powder.

45 And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard His parables, they perceived that He spake of them.

[n] ver. 11. Luke 7. 16. John 7. 40.

46 But when they sought to lay hands on Him, they feared the multitude, because [n] they took Him for a prophet.

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unfaithful. St. Paul, speaking to the Gentiles whom God had grafted in, in place of the "natural branches"—the Jews, uses these remarkable words, "Towards thee, goodness, if thou continue in His goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off" (Rom. xi. 22.). We must not omit to notice that St. Luke records that, after the sentence on the wicked husbandmen, the people, probably seeing the meaning, exclaimed "God forbid."

42. "The stone" &c. Quoted from the same psalm (the 118th) from which the people had borrowed their Hosannas (See on 9.). The "Stone," of course, is Christ. The "builders" are the Jews. The "head of the corner" is the place of chief honour and importance in the building. The chief corner-stone bound the two walls together, as Christ binds together Jew and Gentile. (Compare Acts iv. 11. Eph. ii. 20—22. 1 St. Pet. ii. 6, 7.)

43. "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you." Now our Lord speaks plainly and openly. It is no longer His object to veil the mysteries of the kingdom (See on xiii. 11.). He is striving to convince the Jews of their sin.

44. "Whosoever shall fall on this stone" &c. Those who opposed, and were offended at, and rejected, Christ, fell upon that stone. They were "broken." They fell grievously and suffered in their fall, but there was yet some hope of recovery. But the day is coming when men will no longer stumble at Christ, but when He will come as their Judge, taking vengeance on His enemies. Then, on whomsoever He shall fall, in His righteous wrath, such will be ground to powder, in their utter and everlasting destruction.

45. "The chief priests and Pharisees." The three Gospels all tell us the result of this plain speaking. Instead of opening the eyes of the Jewish rulers to their sin, they blindly go their way to perform their part of the parables. They would have done so at once, but for their fear of the people.

CHAPTER XXII. A.D. 30.

1 *The parable of the marriage of the king's son.* 9 *The vocation of the Gentiles.* 12 *The punishment of him that wanted the wedding garment.* 15 *Tribute ought to be paid to Cæsar.* 23 *Christ confuteth the Sadducees for the resurrection:* 34 *answereth the lawyer, which is the first and great commandment:* 41 *and poseth the Pharisees about the Messias.*

AND Jesus answered [a] and spake unto them again by parables, and said, [a] Luke 14. 16. Rev. 19. 7, 9.

2 The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son,

3 and sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come.

4 Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: [b] my oxen and *my* fatlings *are* killed, and all things *are* ready: come unto the marriage. [b] Prov. 9. 2.

5 But they made light of *it*, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise:

CHAPTER XXII.

1—14. Parable of the marriage of the King's Son.

2. "A marriage for his son." The marriage-*feast* is the event on which the parable is grounded; still the *marriage* itself has its significance, for Christ is compared in holy Scripture to a Bridegroom, and the Church to a bride (See Eph. v. 25—27, 32.). The feast here, like the Great supper in St. Luke (xiv.) signifies the blessedness and the privileges of the kingdom of heaven. Observe how our Lord speaks out now more plainly as to His own Divine Sonship.

3. "To call them that were bidden." They had then been invited before, and this was only the summons to remind them of the invitation when all was ready. The guests are the Jews: the invitation was made long ago by Moses and the prophets: the remindal and summons to the feast were made by John the Baptist and the first preachers of the kingdom. Thus this parable deals specially with New Testament times.

4. "Other servants." Especially the Apostles and other preachers of the Gospel, this second more pressing call referring probably to the time of Apostolic labours after the Gift of Pentecost.

5. "They made light of it," &c. This conduct is much more fully pictured in the parable of the Great Supper (See on St. Luke xiv. 18—20.).

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1. It is scarcely worth while to point out that the Parable of the marriage of the King's Son is a different one from that of the Great Supper in St. Luke (xiv. 16—24.). Any one can see how different they are in their particulars, as well as in the circumstances under which they were spoken.

2. "*The kingdom of heaven is like unto a king.*" See *Note* on xi. 16.

A.D. 30. 6 and the remnant took his servants, and entreated *them* spitefully, and slew *them*.

7 But when the king heard *thereof*, he was wroth: and he sent forth [c] his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.

c Dan. 9. 26. Luke 19. 27.

8 Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not [d] worthy.

d ch. 10. 11, 13. Acts 13. 46.

9 Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage.

10 So those servants went out into the highways, and [e] gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests.

e ch. 13. 38, 47.

11 And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man [f] which had not on a wedding garment:

f 2 Cor. 5. 3. Eph. 4. 24. Col. 3. 10, 12. Rev. 3. 4. & 16. 15. & 19. 8.

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6. "The remnant took his servants," &c. A picture of the sufferings of the early *Christian* martyrs, as in the parable of the Wicked Husbandmen of the *Jewish* prophets (See on xxi. 35.).

7. "His armies." The Roman armies, which were *His*, as the instruments in His hands for the punishment of His people (See on xxiv. 21.). "Their city" is Jerusalem.

9. "Go ye therefore" &c. This represents the calling of the Gentiles, which, though declared from the first, and confirmed by St. Peter's vision and the conversion of Cornelius, and undertaken with rich success by St. Paul, yet was made far more manifest and remarkable by the final rejection and overthrow of the Jews.

10. "Bad and good." There is free entrance to the visible Church of Christ. All are invited. All may come (See on the parables of the Tares and the Draw-net in xiii.).

11. "When the king came in to see the guests." There is then a second sifting. The first separates between those who come and those who refuse to come. But the actual comers must again be sifted, that a separation may be made between those who walk worthily of their calling, and those who are only Christians in name and by profession (See Trench; and compare the Parable of the Ten Virgins, xxv. 1.). But when does the king thus come in to see the guests? No doubt at the last great day, when that final separation shall be made, which Christ's servants cannot make now (See on xiii. 39, 43.). The word translated "to "see" in this verse is a very expressive one, and signifies 'to scrutinize,'—'to regard earnestly and attentively.' What a look that will be, which will read the secrets of every heart, when all mankind stand before the awful throne of judgment!

"A man." *One* is mentioned, not that we may think that very few will be like this man (for see 14.), but to bring the matter home to each individual conscience (See on the fig-tree, St. Luke xiii. 6.).

"A wedding garment." Some have thought that wedding-garments

12 and he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. A.D. 30.

13 Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast *him* [g] into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

[g] ch. 8. 12.

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were supplied to the guests on such occasions, but this seems very doubtful. It is best simply to suppose this man to have come not properly dressed. But what is the spiritual meaning of the "wedding-garment"? This question has given rise to great controversy. Some have contended that it means imputed righteousness,—the righteousness of justification,—that perfect righteousness which we possess not in ourselves, but which God, of His free grace, imputes to those who have a living faith in His dear Son. Others, with equal confidence, maintain that the "wedding-garment" is that personal "holiness, without which no man "shall see the Lord" (Heb. xii. 14.),—the righteousness of sanctification, —the righteousness which, imperfect though it must always be, we must still possess in ourselves, if we would be saved. Surely each of these is partly true, and only untrue in shutting out the other. The whole truth is only grasped by accepting both. What did this man lack? *Fitness for heaven.* This is all the parable teaches. It goes into no doctrinal questions. The statement is perfectly broad and open. But, if we choose to ask, What *is* 'fitness for heaven'?, then must we answer, Not faith without works, for that would be a dead faith. Not works without faith, for that would be the self-righteousness of the Pharisee. Not imputed righteousness alone, for that none has who is not "*in* Christ," and therefore in some degree *like* Christ. Not personal righteousness alone, for that, being so faulty, can avail nothing without God impute to us perfect righteousness. Not justification alone, for that would be the work of the Son without the work of the Spirit. Not sanctification alone, for that would be the work of the Spirit without the work of the Son. 'Fitness for heaven' is each and all of these. It is a living faith, which brings us to Christ for pardon and salvation, and which is accepted by God's mercy to our justification; and it is equally the likeness of Christ, formed in us by the power of the Holy Ghost the Sanctifier, and without which our faith would be dead, not living. In short, '*Fitness for heaven*' is simply that which, if we will, the Father's mercy, the Son's merits, and the Spirit's power, will work in us and for us. It is "righteousness in its largest sense, the whole "adornment of the new and spiritual man" (*Trench.*).

12. **"He was speechless."** We may imagine excuses enough which this man might have made, and with which perhaps he satisfied himself before the king came in and fixed his eye upon him. The hurry of his preparation, the shortness of the time allowed him, the pressure of business,—some such excuses as these he may have made to himself. But they are all gone now. Under the searching eye of the King who will dare to utter his idle excuses?

13. **Take him away," &c.** The sentence here pronounced is exactly that which St. Paul describes as "everlasting destruction from the "presence of the Lord" (2 Thess. i. 9. See on xiii. 41.).

A. D. 30.

14 [h] For many are called, but few *are* chosen.

[h] ch. 20. 16.

15 ¶ Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle Him in *His* talk.

16 And they sent out unto Him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that Thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest Thou for any *man:* for Thou regardest not the person of men.

17 Tell us therefore, What thinkest Thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar, or not?

18 But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye Me, *ye* hypocrites?

[2] In value seven pence halfpenny: ch. 20. 2.

19 Shew Me the tribute money. And they brought unto Him a [2] penny.

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14. "Many are called," &c. This verse (which is the same with the closing words of the parable of the Labourers in the vineyard, xx. 16.) at once shows that the one man without the wedding-garment is only an example of a large class (See on vii. 14.).

15—22. Question as to paying tribute to Cæsar.

St. Mark xii. 13—17. St. Luke xx. 20—26.

16. "Their disciples with the Herodians." These, St. Luke says, were "spies," feigning themselves to be just men. The disciples of the Pharisees and the Herodians would pretend to have had an argument upon the question, which they wished our Lord to decide for them. The Herodians were the party upholding King Herod (See *Note* on xvi. 6.). It is not clear, nor of any importance, what view these questioners themselves took of the matter, since the question was simply asked in guile, to try to draw from our Lord some opinion for which they might be able to accuse Him. Their question was a very skilful one, for had Jesus simply said 'It is lawful,' they would have set the people against Him by saying He was a friend of their Roman conquerors: whereas, had He said, 'It is *not* lawful,' they would certainly (as St. Luke says) have brought Him before Pontius Pilate on the charge of treason against the Emperor.

"We know that Thou art true," &c. How little could they have known of Christ to suppose that they could deceive Him by their wretched flattery!

18. "Why tempt ye Me, ye hypocrites?" How instantly and totally does our Lord unmask them!

19. "A penny." This was a coin in common use in the Holy Land, but it was a Roman, not a Jewish, coin. Probably the Jews were compelled to use Roman money. The "penny" was worth seven pence halfpenny of our money, and was the amount of a day's wages (See on xx. 2.).

20 And He saith unto them, Whose *is* this image and [2] superscription? A.D. 30.

21 They say unto Him, Cæsar's. Then saith He unto them, [i] Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's; and unto God the things that are God's.

22 When they had heard *these words*, they marvelled, and left Him, and went their way.

23 ¶ The same day came to Him the Sadducees, [k] which say that there is no resurrection, and asked Him,

[2] Or, *inscription?*

[i] ch. 17. 25. Rom. 13. 7.

[k] Acts 23. 8.

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20. "Superscription." Something written above—in this case above the "image" or head of the emperor on the coin.

21. "Render therefore unto Cæsar" &c. The word "render" is not merely the same as 'give.' It means rather 'give back' or 'give 'as a due'; thus implying that what is given belongs as of right to him to whom it is given. The money in use in Judæa was the coin of the Roman empire. This was enough to prove the fact of the Jews being under the power and dominion of Cæsar—the Roman emperor. Our Lord accepts that fact, and bids His hearers act upon it. He does not take into account whether the Romans were right or wrong in their conquest of the Jews, or whether the state of things was a good state of things or a bad. Those were questions which those He addressed were not called upon to settle. *Their* duty was to be "subject "unto the higher powers" (Rom. xiii. 1.). No government could be carried on, if every one were at liberty to act upon his own private opinion concerning his rulers and their laws. There may be limits to the endurance of a bad government and bad laws; but this point our Lord leaves untouched, except so far as it is affected by the second part of His saying, "Render unto God the things which are God's." What things are these? Certainly all acts of obedience to God's plain commands. But the expression goes deeper than this. For may we not suppose our Lord to mean this:—'Just as this coin bears the 'image of Cæsar upon it, and thus belongs to him, so do ye yourselves 'bear the image of God, and thus belong to Him'? That image, however much rubbed down and defaced by the rough handling of the world, is not entirely destroyed by the fall (See Gen. ix. 6. and St. James iii. 9.). Therefore what our Lord would say is in short, 'Render *yourselves* as 'tribute due unto God.' Well might the false questioners marvel at the wonderful wisdom of Christ's answer, thus turning their deceitful question into a thought to sift their own consciences. How strange is it after this to find Jesus accused of "forbidding to give tribute to "Cæsar" (St. Luke xxiii. 2.).

23—33. Reply to the Sadducees concerning the Resurrection.

St. Mark xii. 18—27. St. Luke xx. 27—40.

23. "The Sadducees." Our Lord is beset now on all sides. One enemy silenced, another starts up. The most opposite in their views, those who at other times hated and opposed each other most fiercely,

A.D. 30. 24 saying, Master, [1] Moses said, If a man die,
[1] Deut. 25. 5. having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

25 Now there were with us seven brethren: and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased, and, having no issue, left his wife unto his brother:

26 likewise the second also, and the third, unto
[2] Gr. *seven.* the [2] seventh.

27 And last of all the woman died also.

28 Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her.

29 Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err,
[m] John 20. 9. [m] not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.

30 For in the resurrection they neither marry,
[n] 1 John 3. 2. nor are given in marriage, but [n] are as the angels of God in heaven.

31 But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying,

[o] Acts 7. 32. Heb. 11. 16. 32 [o] **I am the God of Abraham, and the God**

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agreed in their enmity to Him. It is now the Sadducees' turn. They are partly described in this very verse, inasmuch as their denial of the resurrection proved them half-infidels (See on iii. 7.). They were a small party, existing chiefly among the upper classes, and disliked by the people generally. This will account for the fact that so much less is said of them than of the more powerful and more outwardly religious Pharisees.

29. **"Ye do err."** They had given no opinion, but they erred in asking the question,—they erred in thinking (or pretending to think) she would be the wife of one of the seven.

"Not knowing the scriptures." This does not apply so much to the actual question of the Sadducees, as to their general unbelief in the resurrection. The fact was, the Sadducees would really have laughed at their own question, and did not really think the woman would be the wife of any one in the next world, because they did not believe in the next world at all. So it is to this deeper matter that our Lord addresses Himself. He ever turns the crafty questions of His enemies into occasions of deep instruction (See on the fuller report of our Lord's answer in St. Luke.).

32. **"I am the God of Abraham," &c.** This quotation has been a difficulty to many. First, why does our Lord quote this mysterious passage as His proof, instead of any of the far plainer passages He might have quoted from the Psalms or the Prophets (such as Ps. xvi. 9. Isai. xxvi. 19. Ezek. xxxvii. 1—14. Dan. xii. 2.)? Doubtless in order to bring Moses forward as His witness. "Even Moses showed," He says in St. Luke. There is no reason to suppose the Sadducees did not accept the prophets, but they probably thought much more of the authority of Moses, and possibly were in the habit of arguing that

of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. A.D. 30. Ex. 3. 6, 16.

33 And when the multitude heard *this*, [p] they were astonished at His doctrine. [p] ch. 7. 28.

34 ¶ But when the Pharisees had heard that He had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together.

35 Then one of them, *which was* [q] a lawyer, asked *Him a question*, tempting Him, and saying, [q] Luke 10. 25.

Moses said nothing about the future state: nay, that, in such a law as that which they brought forward about the brother's wife, Moses was providing for this life only, and gave no hint as to how it would be hereafter. But then comes the far more important question, How does this quotation prove that the dead will rise again? It proves, first of all, that the dead are not really dead in God's sight. Can it be supposed that God would describe Himself thus solemnly as the God of those who had long ceased to exist, and were no better than the beasts that perish? Again, when God thus describes Himself, it is as the God who loved and blessed these His servants and took them into covenant with Himself. But will God make a covenant with a man, and call Himself his God, and then suffer him to perish body and soul for ever? No. "God is not the God of the dead, but of "the living";—"for" (as is added in St. Luke) "all live unto Him." This last sentence means, 'God is not the God,—and would not call 'Himself the God,—of men who are dead and gone and have ceased 'to exist; but He is, and calls Himself, the God of men who are alive 'still unto Him.' So far is sufficiently plain. But we have not yet come to the *resurrection*. How is *this* to be gathered from God's title? From the fact, which none but our Lord could have explained to us, that God, in using this solemn title, regarded the *body* as well as the soul of the dead. In His sight soul and body are so much one, that death cannot destroy for ever this union. And so those words of God which show that the dead are alive unto Him, are to be understood of the whole man, body as well as soul. But how can the *body* be said to be alive unto Him? Partly because it is not dead, in the sense of an eternal destruction, but only asleep, and at last to revive to new life: and partly because the body, however much it may have been turned into dust and lost to human eye, is yet *existing* in God's sight, and ready to be called forth again at His summons. Thus "all live "unto Him." But, if the body lives unto God only in this imperfect way,—only in a temporary state,—only as kept ready to put on its life again, but not yet in very truth alive,—then it is plain there must be a resurrection; else God's purposes would fail, the body would be existing still in vain, and the whole man, as God made him, would have no more place or being for ever.

34—40. Question as to the Great Commandment.

St. Mark xii. 28—34.

35. "A lawyer." That is, one learned in the law,—a teacher and interpreter of the law of Moses. Whether the lawyers were a distinct

A.D. 30. 36 Master, which *is* the great commandment in the law?

r Deut. 10. 12. & 30. 6. Luke 10. 27. 37 Jesus said unto him, r **Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.** Deut. 6. 5.

38 This is the first and great commandment.

s ch. 19. 19. Luke 10. 27. Rom. 13. 9. Gal. 5. 14. James 2. 8. 39 And the second *is* like unto it, s **Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.** Lev. 19. 18.

t ch. 7. 12. 1 Tim. 1. 5. 40 t On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

41 ¶ While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them,

42 saying, What think ye of Christ? whose Son is He? They say unto Him, *The Son* of David.

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class, or not, is uncertain. Some think they were the same as the Scribes, this "lawyer" being called "one of the scribes" by St. Mark, but it is more probable that the word, like 'doctor', simply means one learned in the law.

"Tempting Him." From St. Mark's fuller account (on which see comments) we should gather that this lawyer did not question our Lord with the same malicious purpose as the former questioners. And this our Lord's simple answer to his question would show. So that we must not take the word "tempting" here in so bad a sense as it usually bears, but understand it as simply 'proving' Him—'trying' what answer He would give,—possibly even with a desire to learn.

40. "On these two commandments" &c. That is, these two commandments embrace in themselves all that God requires at our hands. There can be no command that does not fall into one or the other of these. So St. Paul says, "Love is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. xiii. 10.). If we love God, we shall do our duty to God: if we love man, we shall do our duty to man.

41—46. Christ's question concerning Himself.

St. Mark xii. 35—37. St. Luke xx. 41—44.

42. "Whose Son is He?" Our Lord asks the Pharisees this question, certainly not for the mere purpose of exposing their ignorance by their not being able to answer Him, but to draw them, if possible, even at the last, to deeper and truer notions of the Messiah whom they expected, and thus of Himself. The answer given shows how low and imperfect an idea they had of Christ.

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41. "*Jesus asked them.*" That is, the Pharisees. In St. Mark the conversation begins by Jesus asking, "How say the "Scribes that Christ is the Son of Da-"vid?" St. Luke's account agrees with St. Mark's, except that our Lord's question is simply, "How say *they*" &c., the Scribes not being specially named. It is easy to make these accounts accord. Our Lord addresses the Pharisees, and asks them, "What think ye of Christ? whose "Son is He?" to which they answer,—possibly referring to the Scribes, or saying 'The Scribes say,'—"The Son of "David." He then replies, 'How say 'the Scribes this? For, if this be so,—'if, that is, Christ is no more than this,—'then how doth David call Him 'Lord'?

43 He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call Him Lord, saying, A. D. 30.

44 [u] **The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool?** Psalm 110. 1.

[u] Acts 2. 34. 1 Cor. 15. 25. Heb. 1. 13. & 10. 12, 13.

45 If David then call Him Lord, how is He his son?

46 [x] And no man was able to answer Him a word, neither durst any *man* from that day forth ask Him any more *questions*.

[x] Luke 14. 6.

CHAPTER XXIII.

1 *Christ admonisheth the people to follow the good doctrine, not the evil examples, of the scribes and Pharisees.* 5 *His disciples must beware of their ambition.* 13 *He denounceth eight woes against their hypocrisy and blindness:* 34 *and prophesieth of the destruction of Jerusalem.*

THEN spake Jesus to the multitude, and to His disciples,

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43. "How then doth David in spirit" &c. That is, if He is only the son of David, how can David speak of Him in such terms of reverence? By calling Him 'Lord' David proved that he looked upon Him as far more than his son. "In spirit" means, as more fully expressed in St. Mark, "by the Holy Ghost," the "Book of "Psalms" (St. Luke) being thus declared by our Lord to be inspired (See Acts ii. 34.). It is to be observed that the Jews understood that the words "my Lord" in the verse quoted must be spoken of Christ.

46. "Neither durst any man" &c. Our minds are carried back, as we read these words, to that other scene in the temple, where our Lord now was, when at twelve years of age He sat in the midst of the doctors, hearing them and asking them questions, and astonishing them with His understanding and answers. Then they marvelled, now they feared.

CHAPTER XXIII.

1—39. The Scribes and Pharisees condemned.

St. Mark xii. 38—40. St. Luke xx. 45—47.

1. "To the multitude, and to His disciples." Doubtless Scribes and Pharisees were also present, but the discourse was as much for others

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46. We must observe that the account of the widow's mite comes in after this verse, though not given by St. Matthew. See St. Mark xii. 41—44. and St. Luke xxi. 1—4.

CHAPTER XXIII.

1. "*Then spake*" *&c.* Portions of the address given in this chapter seem to have been already spoken by our Lord on other occasions: See St. Luke xi. 39—52. and xiii. 34, 35. From the way in which those passages are recorded it is impossible to believe them to be simple quotations from St. Matthew's longer address in this chapter, given by St. Luke without special regard to the occasion on which they were spoken. He states the circumstances under which they were spoken too minutely to allow of such a supposition. On the other hand we can as little doubt that St. Matthew in this chapter reports a single and continuous discourse, uttered in the temple on the Tuesday in the Passion-week. This discourse itself is very briefly noticed by St. Mark and St. Luke.

A.D. 30. 2 saying, [a] The scribes and the Pharisees sit in
[a] Neh. 8. 4, 8. Mal. 2. 7. Moses' seat:
3 all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, *that* observe and do; but do not ye after their
[b] Rom. 2. 19, &c. works: for [b] they say, and do not.
[c] Luke 11. 46. Acts 15. 10. Gal. 6. 13. 4 [c] For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay *them* on men's shoulders; but they *themselves* will not move them with one of their fingers.
[d] ch. 6. 1, 2, 5, 16. 5 But [d] all their works they do for to be seen of

as for them. It was to warn others of *their* special sins and errors. It was all but hopeless to warn *them*.

2. "**In Moses' seat.**" That is, they hold the office of the teachers of Moses' law. Mark how Jesus always upholds appointed offices and ordinances, however greatly abused or misused.

3. "**All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe.**" This cannot be said without a limit, for our Lord afterwards (16—22.) names certain things which the Scribes and Pharisees bade their disciples observe, yet which He condemns. The meaning is, 'whatsoever, *as sitting in Moses'* '*seat and teaching Moses' law*, they bid you observe, that observe and do.' Christ commanded no obedience to such teaching as the Scribes and Pharisees chose to *add* to that of Moses. See how this bears on the Christian ministry. The Bishops Priests and Deacons of the Church sit in the seat of the Apostles. That is, they hold the office which has come down to them from the Apostles, and are the authorized teachers of Apostolic doctrine. But if in any place the holder of this sacred office be an evil liver, what would be the duty of the people? Would it be to forsake the Church to which such a man was a disgrace? This verse seems to give a different command. It seems to say, 'The ordained 'minister holds a sacred office, and is the appointed teacher of the faith. 'Listen then to his teaching (so far at least as it is in accordance with 'the doctrine he is bound to teach), but copy not his life.' This is only as regards *teaching;* whereas we must remember the Christian minister has other acts to perform; and, if this would be our Lord's advice as to *teaching*, in which the character of the teacher must be more or less felt, how much more would it be so as to sacraments and prayers and creeds, in which the man is nothing, and it is the Church, as it were, which ministers.

4. "**They bind heavy burdens.**" This cannot refer, as often explained, to the *traditions* enforced by the Scribes and Pharisees, for these they themselves certainly did take great pains to perform. It must refer to the strictness and severity of their teaching of the *law;* which law they themselves did *not* keep. "They bind" means 'They 'bind up,'—making up, as it were, great bundles of heavy duties, which they themselves took no trouble to fulfil.

5. "**All their works.**" Such works as they do,—not consisting of humble obedience to God's law, but vain outward observances, and whatsoever may catch the eye of men, which was all they cared for (See vi. 2—5, 16.).

2. "*Scribes.*" See on ii. 4. "*Pharisees.*" See on iii. 7.

men: [e] they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, A.D. 30.

6 [f] and love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues,

7 and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.

8 [g] But be not ye called Rabbi: for One is your Master, *even* Christ; and all ye are brethren.

9 And call no *man* your father upon the earth: [h] for One is your Father, which is in heaven.

10 Neither be ye called masters: for One is your Master, *even* Christ.

11 But [i] he that is greatest among you shall be your servant.

[e] Num. 15. 38. Deut. 6. 8. & 22. 12. Prov. 3. 3.

[f] 3 John 9.

[g] James 3. 1. See 2 Cor. 1. 24. 1 Pet. 5. 3.

[h] Mal. 1. 6.

[i] ch. 20. 26, 27.

"Phylacteries." These were texts of Scripture written upon parchment and worn upon the forehead, and the left arm and side. The practice was taken from the expression which God uses concerning His law:—"It shall be for a sign unto thee upon thine hand, and for a "memorial between thine eyes" (Ex. xiii. 9. See also 16. and Deut. vi. 8. xi. 18.). The word 'phylactery' comes from a Greek word meaning 'to guard,' either because these texts were to help the wearers to guard God's law, or because they imagined them a sort of safeguard or charm against evil. It is probable that the texts above referred to were not meant to be taken literally.

"The borders of their garments." These were literally commanded (See Num. xv. 38, 39. Deut. xxii. 12.). Those who professed special holiness enlarged the breadth of their phylacteries and fringes.

6. **"The uppermost rooms."** "Rooms" here means simply 'places' (See our Lord's discourse, St. Luke xiv. 7—11.).

"Chief seats in the synagogues." Such distinctions seem to have crept into Christian congregations in early times, and are severely dealt with by St. James (ii. 1—4.).

8. **"Be not ye called Rabbi."** That is 'Master,' in the sense in which a pupil would respectfully address his teacher. "Master" in this verse, though a different word from "Rabbi," yet means the teacher, who would be so addressed. In verse 10. the word translated "Master" is a different word, and signifies a 'leader,' or the head of a party.

It is often asked, Are these commands as to titles to be understood literally or no? Certainly not literally; for it would be absurd to say that the word Master, to signify the instructor of a pupil, ought not to be used. Indeed St. Paul proves this point, when he speaks of himself as the spiritual *father* to the Corinthians (See 1 Cor. iv. 15.). The meaning of our Lord is, that Christians are not to seek or to usurp these titles for self-exaltation, nor, in the spirit of the Scribes and Pharisees, to domineer over others.

11. **"He that is greatest" &c.** The blessedness of true humility is one of the most frequent lessons of our Lord (See xviii. 4. xx. 26—28. St. Luke xiv. 11. xviii. 14.). But it must be *true* humility. Whenever the humbling of self is done to be seen of men, and to gain the

A.D. 30.

12 [k] And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.

[k] Job 22. 29. Prov. 15. 33. & 29. 23. Luke 14. 11. & 18. 14. James 4. 6. 1 Pet. 5. 5.

13 But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in *yourselves*, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.

14 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! [l] for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.

[l] 2 Tim. 3. 6. Titus 1. 11.

15 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte,

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credit of humility, it is no longer humility, but becomes pride and hypocrisy.

13. "Ye shut up" &c. In the similar passage in St. Luke (xi. 52.), where our Lord is addressing the "lawyers" (See on xxii. 35.), He uses the striking expression, "Ye have taken away the key of knowledge." This may help to explain the passage before us, showing that the way in which the teachers of the people hindered men from entering the "kingdom of heaven" (See on iii. 2.) was by their false teaching, and their hiding of the true meaning of God's law.

14. "Ye devour widows' houses" &c. These hypocrites won the affection of devout women by their pretended sanctity; and allowed them to expend all their substance upon them, no doubt teaching that their property was devoted to a holy use when thus expended (Compare 2 Tim. iii. 6, 7.).

"Therefore ye shall receive" &c. The word "damnation" here means 'condemnation,' and it would doubtless be so translated in these days, the word "damnation" having ceased to be used in that sense. This is still more important to observe in the wellknown passage upon the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. xi. 29.). But why were the Scribes to receive this "greater damnation"? Because not only did they consume all the substance of the deluded women spoken of, but they did so by means of their pretended piety, which made the sin doubly wicked.

15. "Ye compass sea and land." That is, ye spare no pains.

"Proselyte." The proselytes were converts to the Jewish religion from other nations. There were many of the Gentiles who learnt from the Jews the knowledge of the true God, and were admitted as proselytes, being circumcised, and also (at any rate in later times) baptized. To this latter fact our Lord probably alludes in His conversation with Nicodemus, when He says, "Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest "not these things?" (St. John iii. 10.). The proselytes attended the worship of the synagogue, as we see from various places in the Acts of the Apostles (See Acts xiii. 42, 43, 50. xvii. 4. xviii. 7.). They also attended at the great Festivals, for they were present at the Pentecost (See Acts ii. 10.). Some were faithful servants of God, such as the Centurion of Capernaum, who loved his adopted nation, and had built them a synagogue (St. Luke vii. 5.), and Cornelius, who fasted and

and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves. A.D. 30.

16 Woe unto you, [m] *ye* blind guides, which say, [n] Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor!

[m] ver. 24. ch. 15. 14.
[n] ch. 5. 33, 34.

17 *Ye* fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, [o] or the temple that sanctifieth the gold?

[o] Ex. 30. 29.

18 And, Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is [2] guilty.

[2] Or, *debtor*, or, *bound*.

19 *Ye* fools and blind: for whether *is* greater, the gift, or [p] the altar that sanctifieth the gift?

[p] Ex. 29. 37.

20 Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon.

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prayed and gave alms (Acts x. 2, 30.), and had trained his household and soldiers to follow his example (Acts x. 7, 33.). These however seem to have been exceptions to the rule, for the proselytes in general were not of high character, frequently embracing the Jewish faith from unworthy motives.

"Twofold more the child of hell." These Scribes and Pharisees, who took such pains to make proselytes, filled them with all manner of vain and superstitious notions, and made them the slaves of all sorts of foolish and fanciful rules and distinctions. When this was all the religion they received to correct their heathen vices and ignorance, no wonder they simply became worse than their teachers; especially since new converts are always so much more ready to run into all extremes than others.

16. "He is a debtor." That is, he is bound to perform his oath. The word in the original is the same as that translated "guilty" in verse 18, where the meaning is the same as here.

17. "The gold, or the temple." Our Lord shows the folly of the particular distinctions drawn by the Scribes and Pharisees. But He does not mean at all to imply that their fault lay only in the *degree* of respect which they attached to this or that particular oath. He does not mean to correct them by showing them which oath ought to be considered most binding; as though He were to say, 'He that shall swear by the 'Temple is more bound by his oath than he that shall swear by the 'gold': though this might seem to be His meaning at first sight (See on 20, and on v. 33.).

20. "Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar," &c. Swearing by the altar and by the temple being the two oaths which the Jewish traditions accounted the less binding, these are given, in this and the next verse, as examples to show that, whatever the oath be, it is a solemn and binding appeal to heaven. To swear "by the altar" is the same thing as to swear by the sacrifice offered upon it, and that is to swear by Him to whom the sacrifice is offered. So also to swear "by the "temple" is the same thing as to swear by Him whose holy house the Temple is.

A.D. 30.

21 And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth
q 1 Kin. 8. 13. 2 Chron. 6. 2. Ps. 26. 8. & 132. 14.
by it, and by q Him that dwelleth therein.
22 And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth
r Ps. 11. 4. ch. 5. 34. Acts 7. 49.
by r the throne of God, and by Him that sitteth thereon.

23 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!
2 Gr. ἄνηθον, *dill.*
for ye pay tithe of mint and 2 anise and cummin,
s 1 Sam. 15. 22. Hosea 6. 6. Micah 6. 8. ch. 9. 13. & 12. 7.
and s have omitted the weightier *matters* of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

24 *Ye* blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.

25 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!
t Mark 7. 4.
t for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.

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22. "By heaven." Our Lord probably adds this as being a common oath among the Jews (See v. 34.). What is the great lesson of His rebuke concerning oaths? It is this: That the miserable distinctions made by the Scribes and Pharisees between one oath and another, as to their power to bind, sprang from a false and wrong notion of oaths altogether; inasmuch as an oath is always infinitely solemn and binding, and as such may be neither lightly used nor lightly broken.

23. "Ye pay tithe of mint" &c. This verse exactly describes the religion of the Scribes and Pharisees. It consisted solely in the minute observance of unimportant particulars. Thus they were most careful in paying tithe of the smallest garden herbs, which was beyond what the law required, or what was done by others, while the greatest moral duties, "judgment, mercy, and faith," they utterly neglected. Our Lord does not condemn their careful attention to very little things, as the next verse shows, but only the false and hollow spirit which could raise these trifles into the place of chief importance. The same spirit shows itself continually, and in various ways, little observances, right or harmless in themselves, being magnified into the chief religious duties. Thus small external matters of order and beauty in public worship are by some pressed into this place of undue honour: others again make a strict Sabbatical observance of the Lord's Day, such as our Lord Himself frequently condemned even on the Jewish Sabbath, the chief point in their religion.

24. "Which strain at a gnat," &c. This should be translated 'strain out' a gnat. It is a proverb, taken from straining wine, and means 'you are very particular to strain out some very little thing, 'while you swallow down, without perceiving it, some very great thing.' The 'gnat' and the 'camel' are used in a similar sense to the 'mote' and the 'beam' in the Sermon on the Mount (vii. 3.). Probably the Jews were really very particular in straining all insects out of what they drank, to avoid swallowing unclean animals, which these would be (See Lev. xi. 23.).

25. "Within they are full" &c. This is a figure, or a sort of short

26 *Thou* blind Pharisee, cleanse first that *which is* within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. A.D. 30.

27 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! [u] for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead *men's* bones, and of all uncleanness. [u] Acts 23. 3.

28 Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

29 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous,

30 and say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.

31 Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves,

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parable, representing the Scribes and Pharisees themselves. They were strict and proper in their lives outwardly, but their hearts were filled with "extortion" (that is, greedy avarice) "and excess" (that is, self-indulgence). "Sinful getting and sinful enjoyment" (*Stier*) turned all their outward propriety into hypocrisy.

26. "That the outside of them may be clean also." There is no outward cleanliness without inward. He who aims at the former without the latter only daubs himself with a coating of vile hypocrisy.

27. "Like unto whited sepulchres." In this seventh woe Christ describes the hypocrites under the most terrible figure. They were like the tombs, which were white-washed every year on a certain day that all who passed might see them and avoid touching them, lest they should be defiled. But how loathsome was the corruption within! The religion of these hypocrites was but the white-wash. And such too is all hypocrisy. It has been well said, "The heart of man can be a temple "of the living God, or a grave; a heaven or a hell" (*Stier*).

29. "Ye build the tombs" &c. In this eighth and last woe our Lord exposes the hypocrisy of the Scribes and Pharisees in that, professing to honour the prophets and to condemn their forefathers for their treatment of them, they themselves shared to the full the same spirit of self-righteousness, unbelief, and hatred. Possibly the "whited sepul-"chres" (27) led our Lord on to the thought of the ornamental tombs which were at this period being set up by the Pharisees outside Jerusalem in memory of the olden prophets.

31. "Wherefore ye be witnesses" &c. How were they witnesses that they were "the children of them which killed the prophets"? That is, What proof did they give that they inherited their fathers' spirit? The word "wherefore" suggests the answer, by joining this verse closely to the last. It was by their boastful and arrogant self-righteousness. They said, '*We* should never have been as wicked as our fathers': but in saying this they only proved that they had in them the same self-

A.D. 30. that [x] ye are the children of them which killed the
[x] Acts 7. 51, 52. 1 Thess. 2. 15. prophets.
32 [y] Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers.
[y] Gen. 15. 16. 1 Thess. 2. 16. 33 *Ye* serpents, *ye* [z] generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?
[z] ch. 3. 7. & 12. 34. 34 [a] Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets,
[a] ch. 21. 34, 35. and wise men, and scribes: and [b] *some* of them ye
[b] Acts 5. 40. & 7. 58, 59. & 22. 19. shall kill and crucify; and [c] *some* of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute *them*
[c] ch. 10. 17. 2 Cor. 11. 24, 25. from city to city:
[d] Rev. 18. 24. 35 [d] that upon you may come all the righteous
[e] Gen. 4. 8. 1 John 3. 12. blood shed upon the earth, [e] from the blood of

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righteous spirit which was at the bottom of their fathers' rejection and persecution of the prophets.

32. "Fill ye up" &c. Christ speaks in irony (See on St. Mark vii. 9.), and bids them, as a solemn mode of warning, fill up the full measure of their fathers' wickedness. It wanted but little of this. They already had the same root of pride and self-righteousness, which rebelled against all instruction and reproof, and filled them with murderous thoughts of hatred against Him who spake them. A few days more and they had indeed filled to overflowing the measure of their fathers' sin. (Compare a like command to Judas, St. John xiii. 27.)

33. "Ye serpents," &c. So John the Baptist had spoken (See iii. 7.), and there had been no change in these hypocrites since then, save that they had gone on rejecting grace, and therefore hardening themselves in sin. But observe John the Baptist says, "Who hath "warned you?" Christ says, "How can ye escape?" Their state is far more hopeless now.

34. "Wherefore, behold, I send unto you" &c. The connection of this verse with the foregoing is not very plain. The "wherefore" cannot refer to the words just before it, as though it were, 'I send unto you 'prophets in order that ye may even yet escape the damnation of hell,' because Jesus declares that they would reject such prophets. Probably the "wherefore" refers back to the words "ye are the children of them "which killed the prophets" (31.), and the force in this verse is to be laid, not upon "I send," but upon "ye shall kill and crucify." 'Because ye are the children of them which killed the prophets, 'therefore, behold, those prophets whom I shall send unto you, ye 'shall kill and crucify.' These "prophets, and wise men, and scribes," whom Christ sends, are plainly His Apostles, Evangelists, and other ministers.

35. "That upon you may come all the righteous blood." That is, the *punishment* of all the righteous blood. But why were the Jews of this time to be punished for the murder of *Abel*, in which they as a nation had no more concern than others? Because they not only had the spirit of Cain in them, and so fell under his curse, but because in

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34. "*I send.*" See on St. Luke xi. 49.

righteous Abel unto [f] the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. A.D. 30. [f] 2 Chron. 24. 20, 21.

36 Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.

37 [g] O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, *thou* that killest the prophets, [h] and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would [i] I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens [k] under *her* wings, and ye would not! [g] Luke 13. 34. [h] 2 Chron. 24. 21. [i] Deut. 32. 11, 12. [k] Ps. 17. 8. & 91. 4.

38 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.

39 For I say unto you, Ye shall not see Me

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them all murder rose to a head and was gathered up in the murder of the Son of God.

"Zacharias son of Barachias." There can be little doubt that this is Zacharias son of Jehoiada, whose death is recorded as happening in the manner here described (See *Margin*). The Jewish Scriptures were arranged differently from our Old Testament, and the Books of Chronicles stood last. This then would be the last martyrdom recorded, as that of Abel was the first, in the Jewish Scriptures. It is however difficult to say how the words "son of Barachias" came to be here found, unless some early copyist of this Gospel put them in from their familiar sound, the *prophet* Zachariah being son of Barachias (Zech. i. 1. See on "Abiathar," St. Mark ii. 26.).

36. "All these things" &c. This coming punishment is the great subject of the next chapter.

37. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem." This outburst of passionate love and pity and grief had been uttered once before (See St. Luke xiii. 34, 35.). In the words "how often" our Lord is probably thinking of all the calls and warnings of the prophets of old, for He Himself would, in and through them, have gathered His people unto Himself.

"And ye would not." So St. Paul, "But to Israel He saith, All "day long have I stretched forth My hands unto a disobedient and "gainsaying people" (Rom. x. 21. quoting Isai. lxv. 2.).

38. "Behold, your house is left" &c. The house is the Temple;—"*Your* house"—God's no longer, for God is even now departing from it. Henceforth it is a temple without a God. But the words may also apply to Jerusalem itself, the holy city, from this time abandoned by God, though not actually destroyed for nearly forty years.

39. "Ye shall not see Me." Not only is Jesus now departing for ever out of the temple, but also He is ending His *public* ministry to the Jews, these being His last words spoken in public. All henceforth is for the disciples alone. It is true the Jews actually *saw* Jesus after this, for they saw Him crucified. But they saw Him no more as their Teacher and Saviour. His work with them was done.

A.D. 30. henceforth, till ye shall say, [1] **Blessed** *is* **He that**
[1] ch. 21. 9. **cometh in the name of the Lord.** Ps. 118. 26.

CHAPTER XXIV.

1 *Christ foretelleth the destruction of the temple:* 3 *what and how great calamities shall be before it:* 29 *the signs of His coming to judgment.* 36 *And because that day and hour is unknown,* 42 *we ought to watch like good servants, expecting every moment our master's coming.*

"**Till ye shall say.**" Christ has been speaking very hard and stern things; yet His last words are words of hope. There shall yet be a day when the "blindness" which is "happened unto Israel" shall be taken away, "and so all Israel shall be saved" (Rom. xi. 25, 26.),—a day when the ancient people of the Lord, rejected now for their unbelief, shall hail Christ as their Saviour with truer Hosannas than those with which they greeted Him as He rode into Jerusalem of old. It is an error to understand this greeting of the Lord as referring to His second coming to judge the world. It must surely refer to a national acknowledgement of the Messiah before that day. Unbelievers will not call Him "blessed" when He comes to judge them (See Hosea iii. 4, 5. Zech. xii. 10. xiii. 1. xiv. 7, 8, 11. Rom. xi. 24, 31.). It is well to observe how God in holy Scripture looks upon *nations* as having a life and existence of their own, like individuals. Thus the "ye" in this verse must mean quite a different generation of men from those spoken to, though of the same nation. It is the same as though Christ had said, 'your children' (This is most observable all through Rom. xi.).

CHAPTER XXIV.

1—44. Prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem and of the end of the world.

St. Mark xiii. St. Luke xxi. 5—36.

It will be well to say a few words, by way of preface, concerning this difficult chapter.

It is a great prophecy, and, like other prophecy, has more than one fulfilment. The Apostles asked Christ (3.) concerning the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world. The answer (which occupies the rest of the chapter, and indeed the next also,) embraces both events in one. Each of them is a *coming of Christ* (See on xvi. 28.);—each of them a coming to judgment. The one is a type and shadow of the other. It is quite the character of prophecy to blend together, or hold (as it were) in one grasp, both its nearer and its more distant fulfilment, so that they *seem* closer together than they really are. "Future *events* in "time may be compared to distant *objects* in place. In a mountainous "country, two ridges of hills, rising the one above the other, are seen "from a distance almost as one, although there may be many miles "between them; and it is only when the spectator arrives at the summit "of the first ridge, that he is aware of the chasm between it and the "second. So it is with *future events*. Thus the Prophets of the Old "Testament pass rapidly from describing the first Advent of Christ to "the second Advent, so that the two Advents seem to be blended together

AND Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: A.D. 30.
and His disciples came to *Him* for to shew Him
the buildings of the temple.

"in one" (*Wordsworth*). (Compare Malachi iii. 1, 2. iv. 5, 6.) In the present chapter we see the same blending in one view of the two future judgments, the lesser and nearer that of Jerusalem, the greater and more distant that of the world. "Behind the one mountain peak the other "stands in the far distance" (*Benham.*). The two events however are not confusedly mingled together, as might seem to a careless reader. Both are together in the vision before our Lord's eyes, but not confounded. In the earlier part, as far as verse 28, the nearer event, the destruction of Jerusalem, stands out clearly, although through it there doubtless appears the vast outline of the farther judgment, and in the words in which the former is pictured the latter also is not forgotten. After the 28th verse the more distant and awful event comes out as the prominent and distinct object of the prophecy, though not without constant remembrance of the type and shadow which so fitly prefigured it (See on the word "Immediately" in 29.). In the next chapter the first coming to judgment is past and forgotten; the last stands out grandly and alone. The Great Prophet has travelled on in His prophetic course, and has reached the nearer mountain ridge, and is gazing on the mightier range beyond.

If to any it seem strange that the prophecy of Christ should be of this sort, and not with all the clearness and certainty of Divine foreknowledge, let him remember that the Son of God, when He became Man, of His own free will laid aside, and hid (as it were) from Himself, the perfect knowledge of all things, which belonged to Him as God. Thus in His prophesying He is pleased to speak as the *Human* Prophet, and after the manner of other human prophets, neither revealing, nor indeed *as Man* knowing, all things concerning the subject of His prophecy (See on 36.).

1. **"To shew Him the buildings of the temple."** In consequence of what He had just said to the Scribes and Pharisees as to the desolation of their "house" (xxiii. 38.). The Temple at Jerusalem was a magnificent building, or rather cluster of buildings, with large outer and inner courts. The Temple in our Lord's time was not the same which Solomon built about a thousand years before (See 1 Kings vi. and 2 Chron. iii.), and which was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, when he carried the inhabitants of Judæa into captivity, about four hundred years afterwards (See 2 Chron. xxxvi. 19.). A second temple was built nearly a hundred years after the first was destroyed, upon the return of the Jews from their captivity (See Ezra i—vi.). This again was so greatly enlarged and adorned as to be almost rebuilt by Herod the Great, shortly before the Birth of our Lord; and the vast improvements, begun by him, were still unfinished. We see from St. Mark that the disciples called attention specially to the size of the stones. Some of these (as we read in Josephus) were of enormous size, being from 60 to 70 feet in length, and of pure white marble. At a distance, he says, the temple appeared "like a moun-"tain covered with snow; for those parts of it which were not gilt were "exceeding white."

1. "*Departed from the temple.*" See on xxiii. 39.

A.D. 30. 2 And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these
[a] 1 Kin. 9. 7. Jer. 26. 18. Micah 3. 12. Luke 19. 44. things? verily I say unto you, [a] There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the
[b] 1 Thess. 5. 1. disciples came unto Him privately, saying, [b] Tell us, when shall these things be? and what *shall be* the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?

[c] Eph. 5. 6. Col. 2. 8, 18. 2 Thess. 2. 3. 1 John 4. 1. 4 And Jesus answered and said unto them, [c] Take heed that no man deceive you.

[d] ver. 24. Jer. 14. 14. & 23. 21, 25. John 5. 43. [e] ver. 11. 5 For [d] many shall come in My name, saying, I am Christ; [e] and shall deceive many.

6 And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of
[f] 2 Chron. 15. 6. Isai. 19. 2. Hag. 2. 22. Zech. 14. 13. wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

7 For [f] nation shall rise against nation, and king-

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2. "There shall not be left here" &c. This prophecy was most literally fulfilled, for, in the siege of Jerusalem, although the Roman emperor Titus had given commands to save the temple, yet the soldiers set fire to it, and, when its beauty was thus destroyed, it was ordered to be entirely pulled down, as was done.

3. "Upon the mount of Olives." From the higher parts of this hill (See on xxi. 1.) there is a magnificent view of the city of Jerusalem, in which at that time the temple was the most conspicuous object.

"The disciples." We learn from St. Mark that these were "Peter and "James and John and Andrew." Their question, which is given most fully in this Gospel, divides itself into three parts. 1. When shall the destruction of the temple take place? 2. What shall be the sign of Thy coming? 3. What shall be the sign of the end of the world? To all of which questions our Lord's discourse gives an answer. But we are not to think of these three questions as separating themselves to the Apostles' minds. Probably they regarded the three events they asked about as *one and the same*, supposing that together with, or perhaps closely after, the destruction of Jerusalem, would be the final coming of the Lord, and the end of the world.

4. "Take heed" &c. Christ begins by answering the first part of the Apostles' question, and from this verse to the 14th declares the signs of the drawing near of the destruction of Jerusalem, which is, in a true though a lower sense, His coming (See on xvi. 28.). Yet His language is such as to suggest that these signs are but types of the signs which will announce the approach of the end of the world.

6. "The end is not yet." This appears to be one of the sayings which, though applying at first to the destruction of Jerusalem, should still be carried on and applied to that of which this was only the type. Thus, if the *first signs* were not to alarm the disciples, as though the great national calamity were close at hand, so afterwards, when men professed to declare the end of the world to be approaching, and to point to the signs, they were not to be "soon shaken in mind, or troubled," "as that the day of Christ" was "at hand" (2 Thess. ii. 2.).

dom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, A. D. 30.
and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.

8 All these *are* the beginning of sorrows.

9 [g]Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for My name's sake.

10 And then shall many [h]be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.

11 And [i]many false prophets shall rise, and [k]shall deceive many.

12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

13 [l]But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

14 And this [m]gospel of the kingdom [n]shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

[g] ch. 10. 17. John 15. 20. & 16. 2. Acts 4. 2, 3. & 7. 59. & 12. 1, &c. 1 Pet. 4. 16. Rev. 2. 10, 13.
[h] ch. 11. 6. & 13. 57. 2 Tim. 1. 15. & 4. 10, 16.
[i] ch. 7. 15. Acts 20. 29. 2 Pet. 2. 1.
[k] ver. 5, 24. 1 Tim. 4. 1.
[l] ch. 10. 22. Heb. 3. 6, 14. Rev. 2. 10.
[m] ch. 4. 23. & 9. 35.
[n] Rom. 10. 18. Col. 1. 6, 23.

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8. "All these." The history of the forty years between this time and the destruction of Jerusalem furnishes abundant proof of the fulfilment of this prophecy, the signs given in the three foregoing and the three following verses occurring most strikingly.

9. "Then shall they deliver you up" &c. This verse is manifestly fulfilled throughout the history of the Acts of the Apostles.

12. "The love of many shall wax cold." This was the case with the Church of Ephesus, which had left its "first love" (Rev. ii. 4.), while the Church of Laodicæa is condemned because it was "lukewarm, and "neither cold nor hot" (Rev. iii. 15, 16.).

13. "Unto the end." That is, the end of his trial. This saying answers to that in the message to the Church of Smyrna, "Be thou faith-"ful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev. ii. 10.).

14. "This gospel of the kingdom" &c. This verse has often created a difficulty, the Gospel certainly not having been preached "in all the "world," and "unto all nations," in the fullest sense of the words, before the destruction of Jerusalem. Thus many have supposed this verse to refer only to the last day. But our Lord could not thus confuse and intermingle His subjects. Nor is there really any difficulty here, for, in the Scripture sense of the words, the Gospel *was* preached "in all the "world"—that is, in all the *known* world,—in all parts of the world with which the Jews had any intercourse, before the destruction of Jerusalem. The word "world" here is the same in the original as that in St. Luke ii. 1, in which we read of the decree "that *all the world* "should be taxed," where the words can only apply to the countries under the power of Rome. Observe too "ye shall be hated of *all nations*" (9.), where the same limit must be implied. St. Paul also uses precisely the same language in the same sense (See Col. i. 6, 23. 2 Tim. iv. 17.). Doubtless the words, true as they are of the first great "end"—that

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10. "*Offended.*" See on v. 29. and xvii. 27.

A.D. 30. 15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination
[o] Dan. 9. 27. & 12. 11. of desolation, spoken of by [o] Daniel the prophet,
[p] Dan. 9. 23, 25. stand in the holy place, ([p] whoso readeth, let him understand:)

16 then let them which be in Judæa flee into the mountains:

17 let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house:

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namely of the Jewish kingdom,—still stretch forth in their meaning to the second greater "end"—that of the world. As applied to this, they would take their fullest and widest meaning. Before the end, the Gospel shall be preached "for a witness" literally "unto *all* nations."

15. "**The abomination of desolation.**" This expression is taken from the prophet Daniel, who uses it in three places (ix. 27. xi. 31. xii. 11.), in each of which it is connected with the ceasing of the daily sacrifice. *One* fulfilment of the prophet's words took place when Antiochus Epiphanes set up the statue of Jupiter (the heathen god) in the temple (See 1 Macc. i. 54.). But our Lord by quoting the prophecy showed that it had a yet farther fulfilment. It has been common to interpret the "abomination of desolation" of the standards of the Roman army. This has doubtless arisen from the words in St. Luke (xxi. 20.), "When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies." But there is no reason to suppose these passages refer to the same thing. On the contrary, the "abomination" is "in the holy place," the "armies" are outside the city. It is clear that the warning in the verse before us was to give the Christians time to escape, so that it must have been before the siege actually began. Now we read in the Jewish historian Josephus that *before* the siege a body of lawless robbers and murderers, the worst characters from all the surrounding country, came into the city and seized upon the temple, where they lived, polluting it in the most fearless way, and of course preventing the ordinances of religion being performed. The Christians who had pondered over Christ's words would surely see here the "abomination of desolation." These words literally mean 'the hateful power that maketh desolate,' a most fitting description of that band of ruffians whose mastery over the city caused a "reign of "terror" there.

"(**Whoso readeth, let him understand**)." These are doubtless our Lord's words (not words put in by the Evangelist), spoken to call special attention to the prophecy of Daniel just referred to. They resemble the saying, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear" (xi. 15. xiii. 9, 43.).

It should be noted that from this verse to the 28th our Lord is speaking of the time close upon the destruction of Jerusalem.

16. "**Flee into the mountains.**" So well were the Christians forewarned by this discourse of our Lord that, when the time drew near, seeing the signs, they fled from Jerusalem and the other towns and villages of Judæa, (many of which were taken by the Roman army as they marched towards Jerusalem,) over the mountains to Pella, a place lying beyond the Jordan. Thus but few Christians perished in the frightful ruin of the holy city (See on 22.).

17. "**On the housetop.**" This warning is explained by the fact

18 neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. A.D. 30.

19 And [q] woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! [q] Luke 23. 29.

20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day:

21 for [r] then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. [r] Dan. 9. 26. & 12. 1. Joel 2. 2.

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that the houses in the Holy Land had, and still have, flat roofs, with an outside staircase.

20. "Pray ye" &c. We must not pass over such a plain assertion of the power of prayer. The Son of God, who knew the method of God's dealings, speaks of prayer affecting the details of Divine judgments as though it were the simplest and clearest truth (See on 22.). The Sabbath-day is mentioned, not in order to keep up its observance among Christians (See Col. ii. 16, 17.), but because the Jewish Christians actually did observe the Sabbath (in addition to the Lord's Day) up till the destruction of Jerusalem, and so would have scruples in travelling beyond the Sabbath-day's journey (about a mile) on that day, and would also be hindered by the more rigid scruples of the rest of the Jews.

21. "Such as was not" &c. The sufferings accompanying the siege of Jerusalem are almost incredible. Certainly the world has never known so awful a judgment, save in the Flood, but never so awful an amount of suffering. The Jewish historian, Josephus, in his 'Wars 'of the Jews', relates the terrible story at great length. From the number of people from other parts, who had taken refuge in the city, the horrors of the famine were the more awful. But the outrages and violence and wickedness of the bands of robbers who reigned within the city were even more fearful. At first numbers, in terror of the famine and the robbers, began to desert and go over to the Romans, who were encamped around the walls, but the number was too great for the Romans to keep them alive, so that, partly because it was not safe to spare them, and partly to prevent others following their example, these deserters were taken and crucified before the walls of the city. For some time as many as five hundred were thus put to death *daily;* and "the soldiers," writes Josephus, "out of the wrath "and hatred they bore the Jews, nailed those they caught, one after one "way and another after another, to the crosses, by way of jest; till "their multitude was so great that room was wanting for the crosses, "and crosses for the bodies." What a terrible retribution upon those who "crucified the Lord of life"! After this it came to be found out that many of the deserters had swallowed pieces of gold, as a means of concealing them, whereupon the low rabble, always found around a camp, began to cut open the deserters to search for gold, so that (as Josephus remarks) "no misery which befel the Jews was more terrible "than this, since in one night about two thousand of these deserters "were thus cut open." At last men began to see that there was no better chance in deserting than in remaining in the city. "Then did

A. D. 30. 22 And except those days should be shortened,
[s] Isai. 65. 8, 9. Zech. 14. 2, 3. there should no flesh be saved: [s] but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

"the famine widen its progress, and devoured the people by whole "houses and families. The upper rooms were full of women and chil- "dren that were dying by famine; and the lanes of the city were full "of the dead bodies of the aged. The children also and the young men "wandered about the market-places like shadows, all swelled with "famine, and fell down dead wherever their misery seized them." As it was quite impossible to bury the dead, they were thrown over the walls, where they lay in vast heaps in the trenches. "A deep silence "also, and a kind of deadly night, had seized upon the city; while yet "the robbers were still more terrible than these miseries were them- "selves. For they brake open those houses which were no other than "graves of dead bodies, and plundered them of what they had; and, "carrying off the coverings of their bodies, went out laughing, and tried "the points of their swords on the dead bodies, and on some also that "yet lay alive on the ground." The utter destruction of all natural affection and human pity under the pressure of famine is told with terrible plainness. Every morsel of any thing that could possibly be eaten was savagely fought for, children seizing the food out of the very mouths of old people, and mothers out of the mouths of their children. One frightful story is given of a rich Jewish lady who, robbed of every thing, and maddened by famine, slew and roasted and devoured her own sucking-child, the robbers who rushed in at the smell of food turning away in horror from the dreadful feast. Thus were most literally fulfilled the judgments prophesied by Moses (Deut. xxviii. 49—57.), and the prophetic words of the psalmist Asaph (Ps. lxxix. 1—3.). It remains only to state that one million one hundred thousand Jews are reckoned by Josephus to have perished (for the most part most miserably) during the siege and destruction of Jerusalem, while nearly a hundred thousand more were carried away as captives. Of this vast number the greater part were not citizens of Jerusalem, but either had come there for the Passover, at which time the Romans advanced and surrounded the city, or else had fled there for refuge. (*The above account is taken from Josephus' Wars of the Jews. Book* vi.)

22. **"Except those days should be shortened."** If God had suffered the siege to be prolonged, no one would have escaped.

"For the elect's sake." Three meanings are given to this expression: 1. For the sake of such Christians as had not taken warning in time and fled from the doomed city: 2. In answer to the prayers of the Christian Jews for their suffering fellow-countrymen: 3. For the sake of the ancient people of God's choice, whom, though He punished, He had not "cast away" (Rom. xi. 1, 2.). The first of these three meanings seems the simplest. The word "elect," which means 'chosen,' is in the New Testament used for all Christians,—those, namely, chosen and called into the kingdom of Christ,—and it would not be likely to be used by our Lord here in an Old Testament sense,—that is, of the Jews, as being God's chosen people of old,—without some word to point out the intended meaning. Let us meditate a moment upon the insight here given us into the reasons of God's dealings. How little do

23 [t] Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here *is* Christ, or there; believe *it* not. A. D. 30.

24 For [u] there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, [x] if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

25 Behold, I have told you before.

26 Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, *he is* in the secret chambers; believe *it* not.

27 [y] For as the lightning cometh out of the east,

[t] Luke 17. 23.
[u] ver. 5, 11. Deut. 13. 1. 2 Thess. 2. 9, 10, 11. Rev. 13. 13.
[x] John 6. 37. & 10. 28, 29. Rom. 8. 28, 29, 30. 2 Tim. 2. 19.
[y] Luke 17. 24.

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the great ones of this world dream what power it is which hinders or stays their projects! How little do they suspect that the world's history can be moulded and altered by God's care for the welfare of His lowly and unknown people, or by the prayers of nameless saints!

24. "Great signs and wonders." We cannot doubt that the prophecy of this verse was fulfilled before the destruction of Jerusalem, although possibly a much more striking fulfilment may take place before the end of the world. We do not know who or what the "false "Christs and false prophets" here spoken of were, nor what "signs and "wonders" they were permitted to work. But probably Simon the magician was one of those referred to (See Acts viii. 9—24.). It is remarkable that in these days there are many who claim (under the name of "Spiritualism") a power, which can scarcely be called less than miraculous.

"If it were possible." It has been argued from these words that to deceive—or at least to deceive *fatally*—the elect is impossible. But those who thus argue use the word 'elect' in the sense of 'elect unto 'eternal salvation', which is not only a doubtful meaning of the word in holy Scripture (see on 22.), but even where possibly a true meaning, still admits of a condition, and does not imply that those thus chosen unto salvation must of necessity attain to the salvation for which they were elected. Thus, to give only one instance, St. Paul speaks of himself as enduring "all things for the elects' sake, *that they may also* "*obtain* the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory" (2 Tim. ii. 10.), which he could not have said if the word 'elect' had to his mind borne the meaning of *certain to be saved*. However when our Lord uttered the words before us, He *knew* that His own disciples would not be deceived, and that knowledge fully explains the words "if it were possible."

26. "In the desert" ... "in the secret chambers." The places whither, doubtless, the "false Christs and false prophets" invited their followers to assemble. Ancient writers trace in these words a more spiritual meaning, and would teach us to learn from them that Christ is not to be found in any strange and unlikely and unknown way (the "desert"), such as is the wilderness of doubt and half-belief and human reason: nor again in the narrow doctrines of sects and divisions (the "secret chambers"): but in the Catholic or universal Church, which is His kingdom.

27. "As the lightning." When Christ came to take vengeance on

A.D. 30. and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

[z] Job 39. 30. Luke 17. 37. 28 [z] For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.

[a] Dan. 7. 11, 12. 29 [a] Immediately after the tribulation of those days

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the guilty people, it was in no lonely desert, nor in any secret chamber, that He manifested His coming, but it fell like a thunderbolt (as we say) upon the doomed city, and showed itself in a judgment awful and sudden and visible to all. So too will be His second bodily coming to judge the world. He will not be found in a Bethlehem stable, nor be pointed out by a voice crying in the wilderness, but "Behold He "cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him" (Rev. i. 7.).

28. "Wheresoever the carcase is," &c. Different explanations have been given of this difficult verse. It appears to be of the nature of a proverb, and describes the certainty as well as the rapidity with which the "eagles"—or more correctly perhaps the *vultures*—will scent out and flock to a dead body. Probably the best interpretation is that which makes the putrifying carcase a dreadful image of the deadly state of the Jewish nation, and the vultures types of God's judgments; the meaning being that wheresoever people have corrupted themselves so horribly there God's judgments will surely and quickly fall. It is perhaps right to mention that the early Christian writers generally understand the "carcase" to mean Christ, and the "eagles" His saints; but this does not well accord with the general sense of the whole discourse, which is concerning the coming judgments. Certain modern commentators see in the "eagles" a reference to the brazen eagles which the Roman armies bore as their standards, and which would gather round Jerusalem in the siege. There may be such a reference intended; but not as the first or chief sense; especially when we recollect the nature of this discourse as pointing, in all its parts, onward to a greater and wider fulfilment (See too on St. Luke xvii. 37.).

29. "Immediately." Here for three verses the nearer and national judgment almost passes out of sight, and the farther and world-wide judgment comes to the front. But how then is the word "Immediately" used? Certainly the one judgment has *not* followed "*immediately*" upon the other. Nor can we be satisfied to say that the word is only used as events appear to God, to whom "one day is as a thousand years, and "a thousand years as one day" (2 St. Peter iii. 8.). Nor again is it at all satisfactory to make "immediately" bear the sense of 'suddenly,' as some wish to do. It seems best to extend the "tribulation of those "days" over all the present ages, understanding it of the rejection and humiliation of the Jewish people. St. Luke (xxi. 24.) brings in words in this place which greatly support this sense, adding, "And "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of "the Gentiles be fulfilled." Then we may well understand our Lord to say, "Immediately after this tribulation shall have accomplished "its allotted course, then shall be manifested those startling events "which shall herald the final approach of the Judge" (*Prescott*). There will be no other marked and signal coming of the Judge until the end. When the one judgment has run its course and passed away, then will be the time for the other, and that the last, to begin.

[b] shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: A.D. 30.

30 [c] and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: [d] and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, [e] and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

31 [f] And He shall send His angels [2] with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

32 Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer *is* nigh:

33 so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know [g] that [3] it is near, *even* at the doors.

[b] Isai. 13. 10. Ezek. 32. 7. Joel 2, 10, 31. & 3. 15. Amos 5. 20. & 8. 9. Acts 2. 20. Rev. 6. 12.
[c] Dan. 7. 13.
[d] Zech. 12. 12.
[e] ch. 16. 27. Rev. 1. 7.
[f] ch. 13. 41. 1 Cor. 15. 52. 1 Thess. 4. 16.
[2] Or, *with a trumpet, and a great voice.*
[g] James 5. 9.
[3] Or, *he.*

"**The sun**" &c. It is common in prophecy to describe great troubles and disturbances under this figure (See Isai. xiii. 9, 10. xxxiv. 4. Jer. iv. 28. Ezek. xxxii. 7, 8. Joel 2. 10. Amos viii. 9.).

"**The powers of the heavens.**" Probably this only means the greater heavenly bodies, namely the sun and moon themselves, greater *to us*, as ruling our day and night, even though not greater in themselves. Possibly the disturbances foretold in these words are not only convulsions of states and nations, but the darkening of the light of truth by heresies and unbelief. Yet observe the *literal* signs in the heavens as described by St. Peter (2 iii. 10—12.).

30. "**The sign of the Son of man.**" The nature of this sign we are not told. Many writers believe it to be the sign of the Cross; but it is enough for us to know that when it appears we shall know it.

"**Mourn.**" Stricken with anguish at the approach of Him whom by their sins they have crucified.

31. "**He shall send His angels**" &c. It is difficult to suppose that this is a different sending forth of Angels from that mentioned in xiii. 41, except that that is to gather out of His kingdom all evil things, whereas this is to "gather together His elect." It seems that first all evil shall be gathered out and destroyed, and then all the good gathered together, by the same angelic beings (Compare 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17.).

32. "**Now learn a parable**" &c. This parable is intended to teach us to mark the signs of Christ's coming; and, like the rest of this discourse, has its double application.

33. "**All these things.**" This expression must surely include in its fulness even the great events described in the verses next before it. So that it is rash to be making sure of the nearness of Christ's coming, as has often been done, upon the occurrence of only *some* of the signs.

"**It is near.**" The word "It" is not in the original, either in this

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32. "*Of the fig tree.*" The word "of" here means 'from.' It was a very common use of the word in old times. See another use of the word in St. Luke xvi. 9.

A.D. 30. 34 Verily I say unto you, [h]This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.

35 [i]Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away.

36 [k]But of that day and hour knoweth no *man*, no, not the angels of heaven, [l]but My Father only.

[h] ch. 16. 28. & 23. 36.
[i] Ps. 102. 26. Isai. 51. 6. Jer. 31. 35, 36. ch. 5. 18. Heb. 1. 11.
[k] Acts 1. 7. 1 Thess. 5. 2. 2 Pet. 3. 10.
[l] Zech. 14. 7.

or in St. Mark's Gospel, and we should be at a loss to know *what* is said to be "near," had not St. Luke supplied us with the words "the "kingdom of God." (St. Luke xxi. 31.). So far as the parable refers to the destruction of Jerusalem, the "kingdom" must be understood in its ordinary sense (See on iii. 2.), and the words must refer to that more complete setting up of the kingdom of God or of heaven—the Church of Christ—which took place when the Jewish kingdom came finally to destruction. By a 'more complete setting up of the Church of Christ' is not meant an increase of worldly power or position, but a standing forth more distinctly as a divine and spiritual power in the world. When we apply the parable, as doubtless it is *chiefly* to be applied, to the last days, the "kingdom of heaven" must be understood in its higher sense, as the perfected and triumphant kingdom (See on xiii. 43.).

34. "This generation." If we understand "generation" here in its more usual sense as meaning those living at the time, the fulfilment named in this verse *can only* refer to the destruction of Jerusalem. But it is all but impossible to believe that our Lord could have spoken this one verse in such a narrow sense, when His words both before and after it bear so much wider a sense, and so certainly refer to the end of the world. It seems to have been sufficiently proved that the word here translated "generation" is used at times to signify a 'race' or 'people': so that we may interpret our Lord's words as meaning that the Jewish race or people would not pass away till the end. Their city was to be destroyed, their power broken down, and themselves scattered into all lands. This has come to pass. Yet they remain a distinct and separate race still.

35. "Heaven and earth." This is a common expression, simply meaning all created things. "Heaven" signifies the heavenly bodies, not the abode of God's glory.

36. "Of that day and hour knoweth no man," &c. The "day and "hour" are those of the *final* completion of the prophecy, or the end of the world; for this comes more and more into the foreground as we go on. St. Mark (xiii. 32.) adds the important words "neither the "Son"; but they are implied here in "*My Father only*." In becoming Man the ever-blessed Son of God, who as God of necessity knew all things, of His own free will laid aside His Divine knowledge of all things, together with His Divine glory, so as to become very Man. He appears to have laid upon Himself the limit of His Father's will

34. "*Shall not pass.*" The Greek word for "pass" here is the same as that translated "pass away" in the next verse. Possibly we may find in this repetition of the same expression a reason for interpreting the "generation" of a race or nation which could last to the end, rather than of those only living at the time. For it seems probable that the *not passing away* in the two verses would stretch forward to a like distance. That in the latter verse certainly stretches forward to the end of the world. Therefore probably that in the former verse does so also.

37 But as the days of Noe *were*, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. A.D. 30.

38 [m] For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, [m] Gen. 6. 3, 4. 5. & 7. 5. Luke 17. 26. 1 Pet. 3. 20.

39 and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

40 [n] Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. [n] Luke 17. 34, &c.

41 Two *women shall be* grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

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in respect to His knowledge, as well as to His revelations to man, while on earth (See on St. John v. 20. xii. 49, 50.). Ancient fathers held that the meaning of this verse is that Christ did not know these things *so as to reveal them* to us. But this seems a very forced sense to give to His words, and it seems better to accept the truth that this was a matter, the knowledge of which He hid from Himself during His sojourn on earth (*See the last paragraph of the preface to this chapter.*). What a rebuke is this verse to the vain and presumptuous prophecies of those who profess to foretell the times which "the Father hath put "in His own power" (Acts i. 7.)!

37. "As the days of Noe were." Our Lord had before this, when He spoke words of like warning on an earlier occasion, used this same example, adding to it that of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (See St. Luke xvii. 26—30.). The Flood, the ruin of the cities of the plain, and the destruction of Jerusalem, are the three chief types of the end of the world. There is nothing to lead us to expect that the world will become very different from what it is before the end. The many will be as unprepared for that day as they were for the three judgments which are its foreshadowing types.

38. "The ark." The ark has always been looked upon as a type of Christ's Church, in which His elect may be safe from the ruin of the guilty world.

40. "Then shall two" &c. This teaches us not only that men shall be engaged in their ordinary daily employments when Christ comes, but also that good and bad shall be so engaged together. To human eye there may be little to mark the difference. To God's eye one is watching, the other not. The same truth is told us more widely in the words "Let both grow together until the harvest" (xiii. 30.).

41. "The mill." To this day corn is ground in Palestine by women, and with mills probably exactly like those which were used in our Lord's time. The two millstones are placed on the ground, the lower (or 'nether') one being fixed, and two women, seated opposite one another,

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40. "*Two.*" St. Luke, in the earlier discourse, of which this is in part a repetition, records another example of the separation of close companionship which will take place—"There shall be "two men in one bed; the one shall "be taken, and the other left" (St. Luke xvii. 34.).

A.D. 30.
o ch. 25. 13.
42 o Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

p Luke 12. 39. 1 Thess. 5. 2. 2 Pet. 3. 10. Rev. 3. 3. & 16. 15.
43 p But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.

q ch. 25. 13. 1 Thess. 5. 6.
44 q Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.

r Acts 20. 28 1 Cor. 4. 2. Heb. 3. 5.
45 ¶ r Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?

s Rev. 16. 15.
46 s Blessed *is* that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

t ch. 25. 21, 23. Luke 22. 29.
47 Verily I say unto you, That t he shall make him ruler over all his goods.

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work the upper stone by means of handles which they push backwards and forwards.

42. "Watch." It is the will of God that His people should always live in readiness for the coming of the Lord. This is surely one reason why no man may know the time;—one reason perhaps why the great prophecy of this chapter is purposely indistinct on this point. The coming of Christ is constantly held up to Christians in holy Scripture as the great object to which they should look forward. Here it is in fear: more often it is in hope and joyful longing. We must not forget that death is to each one in a sense the coming of the Lord: for as death finds us, so will judgment find us. But it is wonderful how seldom death is named as the Christian's hope in comparison with the coming of his Lord. It seems God's will that our hopes and longings should bridge over the space between death and resurrection, and therefore little is told us of the intermediate state.

43. "The goodman." An old expression for the master of the house. Of course the disciples here are represented by the "good-man," and the Lord by the "thief."

45—51. The faithful and the evil servant.

St. Luke xii. 42—51.

45. "A faithful and wise servant." The latter part of this verse shows that the servants here spoken of are principally those whom Christ has set over His Church as "stewards of the mysteries of God" (1 Cor. iv. 1.). Still the words bear their lesson for all. St. Mark supplies us with both an introduction to, and also a practical application of, this short parable (the former in xiii. 34, and the latter in xiii. 35—37. See on 34.).

46. "So doing." That is, watching.

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43. "*Watch.*" See on xiv. 25.

45—51. This latter portion of the chapter is, together with the whole of the next chapter, a part of the same discourse, and only given under a separate head above because it has a completeness of its own, and forms a sort of parable in itself.

48 But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; A.D. 30.

49 and shall begin to smite *his* fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken;

50 the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for *him*, and in an hour that he is not aware of,

51 and shall [2]cut him asunder, and appoint *him* his portion with the hypocrites: [u] there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

[2] Or, *cut him off.*
[u] ch. 8. 12. & 25. 30.

CHAPTER XXV.

1 *The parable of the ten virgins,* 14 *and of the talents.* 31 *Also the description of the last judgment.*

THEN shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet [a] the bridegroom.

[a] Eph. 5. 29, 30. Rev. 19. 7. & 21. 2, 9.

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48. "**My lord delayeth his coming.**" This is the very snare of Satan. Whether it be of death or of judgment, he is ever saying, 'It 'is far off. There is time yet. There is no need for hurry.'

51. "**With the hypocrites.**" That is, with those who are most hateful to the Lord, as we see all through chapter xxiii.

CHAPTER XXV.

1—13. Parable of the Ten Virgins.

1. "**Then.**" That is, at the end of the world, to which the great prophecy of the last chapter has been pointing more and more clearly as it has advanced.

The two parables and the great final discourse of this chapter picture to us the last judgment under different figures, and with different practical lessons.

The lesson of the parable of the Ten Virgins is that of the necessity of *perseverance unto the end.*

In order to understand this parable we must remember that in the Holy Land marriages took place at night, and that, after the marriage ceremony in the house of the bride, the bridegroom conducted her to her new home, accompanied by a number of virgins (the bridesmaids, as they may be called,) who carried lamps and sang, as they went along. Ten was the customary number of these bridesmaids. On arriving at the bridegroom's house the marriage supper took place.

"**Ten virgins.**" Who are meant by these? All Christians who are expecting the coming of the Lord—the heavenly Bridegroom. Observe this parable does not say a word about the wicked and impenitent. *They* do not go forth to meet Christ. The ten virgins are all of them making *some* efforts to get ready. They have all *some* religion. They all begin well.

"**Their lamps.**" The lamps signify the light of good works (See v. 16.), or a religious life. All ten light up the flame of religion, and begin to make ready for the Lord's coming.

A.D. 30. 2 [b] And five of them were wise, and five *were*
[b] ch. 13. 47. & 22. 10. foolish.

3 They that *were* foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:

4 but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

[c] 1 Thess. 5. 6. 5 While the bridegroom tarried, [c] they all slumbered and slept.

"Went forth." The virgins were not present at the actual marriage ceremony, but met the bridal party as they went to the marriage-feast. The *going forth* of the ten virgins represents the forsaking of sin and the world by Christ's followers, and the entering His service.

2. "Wise" . . "foolish." The difference is not of the same sort as that between the "faithful" and the "evil" servant in the last chapter (xxiv 45. 48.). It is much less. Yet it parts them for ever!

3. "No oil." This does not mean that there was no oil *at first*, for then their lamps could never have burnt at all. It means, no extra store of oil wherewith to feed the light and keep it alive. But what is the 'oil'? Certainly the supply of the Holy Spirit of God,—the grace which God bestows,—and without which religion cannot last. Thus the 'oil' exactly answers to the 'moisture' in the parable of the Sower (See St. Luke viii. 6.), without which the blade of corn could only endure "*for a while*."

4. "Their vessels." The vessel was no part of the lamp, but was carried separately, and held a store of oil for the replenishing of the lamp. There is no need to press this word into any spiritual meaning. The great point is the presence or the absence of the needful supply of the oil.

5. "They all slumbered and slept." To understand this of growing careless (as some do) seems to destroy, or at least greatly to weaken, the force of the parable, which lies in the fact that, while *some* did grow careless, the others continued in readiness to the end. It is better to understand this verse as describing the falling asleep one after another of wise and foolish alike in the sleep of death. It thus teaches us that, as our state of preparation is, when we fall asleep in death, so will it be, when we awake at the resurrection. We shall find our lamps exactly as we left them. Still this interpretation is not without difficulty. 1. It is objected to it that it would imply that *all* will be dead at the coming of the Lord. This is not a very serious objection, for, as such a vast proportion of mankind will then be dead, there is nothing very strange in the parable fixing the attention mainly on these. Indeed in common language we often speak of death as the portion of all, though of course this is not exactly true. Moreover those who will be alive at the coming of the Lord are left out of sight in the passage in the Hebrews (ix. 27, 28.), which speaks of death and judgment as the appointed lot of man. 2. A more serious objection lies in the argument that this view appears to represent death as a state of unconsciousness, in as much as the virgins seem on awaking not to know their state of readiness for meeting the Bridegroom. In answer to this it may be said that this is pressing the words too far, for no more can be gathered from them than that our state of preparedness will be our first thought at the resurrection (See on 7.).

6 And at midnight [d] there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. A.D. 30.

7 Then all those virgins arose, and [e] trimmed their lamps.

8 And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are [2] gone out.

9 But the wise answered, saying, *Not so;* lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.

[d] ch. 24. 31. 1 Thess. 4. 16.

[e] Luke 12. 35.

[2] Or, *going out.*

It is quite possible the spirit, during its separation from the body, has a far keener consciousness of its true state than it can possess while in the flesh; and yet that the coming of Christ may no less turn all men's eyes upon themselves, and bring each one's state, with an awful intensity, before him. Moreover it seems plain that the spirits of the departed do not foresee with perfect clearness their everlasting state (See the next parable, and verses 37 and 44.), however true it may be that they await the end in a state either of blissful hope or of horrible dread.

6. "At midnight." That is, at an hour when least looked for. The time was past when the bridegroom would be most naturally expected. He had delayed his coming (See xxiv. 48.). So it is with the true Bridegroom. The expectation of His coming was keenest in the early ages of the Church. Now "the night is far spent," and men begin to think the Lord "slack concerning His promise" (2 St. Pet. iii. 9.). Yet His words are, "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth" (Rev. xvi. 15.), and again, "Surely I come quickly" (Rev. xxii. 20.).

7. "Arose, and trimmed their lamps." That is, they looked to and tended the wick, to see if it would burn up, so that they could carry it in the procession. This represents the first thing which every one will do on the appearing of the Lord to Judgment. At that awful moment we shall each one turn a rapid look inward on our hearts to see whether or no they are fit to meet the Judge. This interpretation does not deny that there will be a *consciousness* of the state of preparedness in each one before, but only supposes that such consciousness will become supremely real and overwhelming on that day (See on 5.).

8. "Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out." The word translated "are gone out" is more literally 'are going out.' The flame had been gradually dwindling and dying, and now the foolish virgins awake just in time to see the last spark disappear. Perhaps this is to represent the fearfulness of being *so nearly ready* and yet shut out. A very little more care, a very little more perseverance, might have sufficed. What a lesson not to be weary of watching. "Yes, if the "Lord would but come at once and fetch us, when our lamp is first "lighted, when the first love burns most brightly! But He will delay, "and then surprise us" (*Stier.*). The calling upon the wise virgins to give them of their oil is the last vain hope of the foolish in their fear and confusion.

9. "Not enough for us and you." "None can by any means "redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him" (Ps. xlix. 7.). The holiest saint has nothing to spare which he can make over to another who lacks. "When ye shall have done all those things which

A.D. 30.

10 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and [f] the door was shut.

11 Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, [g] Lord, Lord, open to us.

12 But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, [h] I know you not.

13 [i] Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

[f] Luke 13. 25.
[g] ch. 7. 21, 22, 23.
[h] Ps. 5. 5. Hab. 1. 13. John 9. 31.
[i] ch. 24. 42, 44. Mark 13. 33, 35. Luke 21. 36.
1 Cor. 16. 13. 1 Thess. 5. 6. 1 Pet. 5. 8. Rev. 16. 15.

"are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done "that which was our duty to do" (St. Luke xvii. 10.).

"Go ye rather to them that sell." That is, Go and seek the oil ye need where alone it is to be had. Good advice, though now too late. It is God who sells the true oil of the Holy Spirit. If ye would have it, seek it from Him in prayer and other means of grace.

10. "While they went to buy." It is not necessary to press this expression too closely, but it may represent the unprepared as falling on their knees and crying for the gifts of grace and mercy, which they should have sought before.

"They that were ready." This is the very point of the parable. Its whole warning is for those who are *not quite ready*.

11. "Afterward came also the other virgins." Not that they had succeeded in obtaining the oil, and making their lamps burn up again, but, having tried in vain, they make one last cry for mercy.

12. "I know you not." The word "know" has here a peculiar fulness of meaning, as in the passage, "I am the good Shepherd, and "*know* My sheep, and am known of Mine" (St. John x. 14.). The Bridegroom's words mean, 'I know you not as of My friends and 'companions. Ye have chosen to be strangers to Me, and strangers 'ye must remain.'

13. "Watch therefore," &c. This verse is not part of the parable, but is our Lord's application of it.

14—30. Parable of the Talents.

This parable sets before us the *outward work* of Christians, as the 'Ten Virgins' the *inward grace*. *Here* we see the "diversities "of gifts": *there* the "same Spirit," by which they are all sanctified (See 1 Cor. xii. 4.). The parable of the Talents must be carefully distinguished from that of the Pounds in St. Luke xix. 12—27. They were spoken on different occasions, and with different objects. In the 'Talents' the first two servants show the same faithfulness with different gifts. In the 'Pounds' they show a different faithfulness with the same gifts. "Two most important truths are thus brought out, which "could not have conveniently been done in a single parable,—first, "by the 'Talents,' this truth,—that *according as we have received will "it be expected from us*:—secondly, by the 'Pounds,' this,—that *as*

13 "*Wherein*," &c. These few last words of the verse are not found in the best ancient copies, but the sense is not altered by their omission.

14 ¶ [k] For *the kingdom of heaven is* [1] as a man travelling into a far country, *who* called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. A.D. 30.

15 And unto one he gave five [2] talents, to another two, and to another one; [m] to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.

16 Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made *them* other five talents.

17 And likewise he that *had received* two, he also gained other two.

18 But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money.

[k] Luke 19. 12.
[1] ch. 21. 33.
[2] A talent is 187*l.* 10*s.*
ch. 18. 24.
[m] Rom. 12. 6. 1 Cor. 12. 7, 11, 29. Eph. 4. 11.

"*men differ in fidelity, in zeal, in labour, so will they differ in the "amount of their spiritual gains*" (*Trench.*).

14. "His own servants." Like the last parable, this too is spoken of those distinctly called to be Christ's servants. It was addressed to the Apostles, and to them therefore, together with all to whom the highest gifts are entrusted, it speaks firstly and most weightily. Still it bears, as all can see, its lessons for all who have been "called" to Christ, and to whom He has "delivered" His gifts.

15. "Five talents." The 'talents' represent all inward graces and powers, as well as all outward gifts and opportunities, which may be used for God's glory. We must not fail to observe how completely the word 'Talent,' which originally meant simply a sum of money (See on xviii. 24.), has been adopted into our language from this parable, in the sense of any gift or power of the mind.

"According to his several ability." That is, according as each man was able to receive. This "ability"—or capacity—would mean each man's *natural* powers and position. To these his responsibilities for doing good correspond. Thus to the naturally clever is committed the talent of imparting and upholding the truth; to those born to riches and high station, is committed the talent of promoting all good by their wealth and influence. But we must not forget that this "ability"—these natural gifts, whether inward or outward,—are also of God. "For who maketh thee to differ from another? And what "hast thou that thou didst not receive?" (1 Cor. iv. 7.)

"Straightway took his journey." We can scarcely help understanding these words of Christ's Ascension into heaven, accompanied as it was by the committing of such talents to His disciples, both in His previous bestowal of grace and wisdom and power, and still more in the mighty gift of Pentecost. Yet we must speak cautiously, for we have had similar language before (xxi. 33.), where no such meaning is possible, for the "Householder" there is God the Father, and the going "into a far country" represents only God's seeming absence,—or the absence of further direct dealings with His people,—after once revealing His will.

16. "Traded." That is, faithfully used his powers and opportunities of good; and so using grace gained fresh grace.

18. "Digged in the earth, and hid" &c. This man thought he

A. D. 30.

19 After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them.

20 And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more.

21 His lord said unto him, Well done, *thou* good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, [n] I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into [o] the joy of thy lord.

22 He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them.

23 His lord said unto him, [p] Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

[n] ver. 34, 46. ch. 24. 47. Luke 12. 44. & 22. 29, 30.

[o] 2 Tim. 2. 12. Heb. 12. 2. 1 Pet. 1. 8.

[p] ver. 21.

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had so little power of doing good that it was not worth while to try at all. He might not have been able to gain five talents with his one, but had he only gained *one* more, he would have done as well as the other two, and have been no less acceptable to his lord, "For if there "be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, "and not according to that he hath not" (2 Cor. viii. 12.).

19. "After a long time." If we were tempted to put a wrong meaning upon the "Immediately" in the last chapter (xxiv. 29.), here should we find ourselves corrected. Many at first expected the coming of Christ to be close at hand. St. Paul warns the Thessalonians (2 Thess. ii. 2.) not thus to mistake his words,—not to be "shaken in mind" or "troubled", as though he had said "that the day of Christ is at hand".

20. "Behold, I have gained." Well does Archbishop Trench say, "In St. Matthew the faithful servant comes forward, saying, "Behold, "*I* have gained"; while in St. Luke it is, "*Thy pound* hath gained." "Thus between them they make up the speech of St. Paul,—"I—yet "not I, but the grace of God that was with me." "

21. "Ruler over many things." This is a very plain proof that there will be differences of rank and reward hereafter. By the "few "things" of the servant's faithfulness and the "many things" of his reward we see that the reward bears no comparison with the work. It is "*according to*"—that is, in proportion to—the work, but so infinitely greater that all idea of *merit* or *wages* fades away.

"Enter thou into." "It is but little that we can receive here, "some drops of joy that enter into *us;* but there *we* shall enter into "joy, as vessels put into a sea of happiness" (*Archbishop Leighton.*).

23. "Well done," &c. Observe; precisely the same words are said to the servant who had four talents as to the one who had ten. It is not the amount performed, but the faithfulness in performing, which is what the Lord regards; and this was the same in each.

24 Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: A. D. 30.

25 and I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, *there* thou hast *that is* thine.

26 His lord answered and said unto him, *Thou* wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed:

27 thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and *then* at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.

28 Take therefore the talent from him, and give *it* unto him which hath ten talents.

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24. "An hard man." This was the slothful servant's pretended excuse. He *may* have fancied it a real excuse. But if so,—if he really believed what he said of his master,—he could have taken very little trouble to learn that master's character and dealings. Thus do slothful men, who care not to do God's work, easily persuade themselves into some wrong notions of God's character and requirements, which serve them for an excuse to themselves.

"Reaping" &c. That is, exacting more from thy servants than thou givest them power to do.

25. "There thou hast that is thine." Of course in reality no one can give back God's gifts neither wasted nor improved. These words are only to show that this servant's guilt lay simply in *neglecting to use* the talent given him. "He had not wasted his master's goods, "like the Unjust Steward; nor spent all his portion in riotous living, "like the Prodigal; nor was he ten thousand talents in debt, like "the Unmerciful Servant" (*Trench.*). His sin was his *unprofitableness.*

26. "Thou knewest." The master does not waste time in showing how false a notion the servant has of his character and dealings. He shows him what is more to the point, namely, that his excuse is no excuse at all. It is as though he answered, "Be it so; out of thine "*own* mouth will I judge thee; grant me to be such as thou describest,— "severe and exacting; yet even then thou art not cleared, for thou "oughtest to have done me justice still" (*Trench.*).

27. "The exchangers." Probably this point in the parable has no special spiritual meaning, but is simply intended to imply that this servant ought to have traded like the others with his money. Perhaps however it may describe an *easy* and *ready* way of making use of it; as much as to say, 'If you had not courage or patience to do more with 'my money, you might *at least* have put it out at interest,—you might 'have turned your talent to some little account.'

"Usury." The interest upon money lent. The word is *now* used for any excessive and improper rate of interest.

28. "Take therefore the talent from him," &c. Although this is here described as taking place just before the final sentence, because it

A.D. 30.

29 [q] For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.

[q] ch. 13. 12. Mark 4. 25. Luke 8. 18. & 19. 26. John 15. 2.

30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant [r] into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

[r] ch. 8. 12. & 24. 51.

31 ¶ [s] When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory:

[s] Zech. 14. 5. ch. 16. 27. & 19. 28. Mark 8. 38. Acts 1. 11. 1 Thes. 4. 16. 2 Thes. 1. 7. Jude 14. Rev. 1. 7.

32 and [t] before Him shall be gathered all nations:

[t] Rom. 14. 10. 2 Cor. 5. 10. Rev. 20. 12.

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is a part of the lord's *reckoning* with his servants (19), yet in stricter truth it belongs to the whole time of the servants' trial, and only sums up that which has been taking place all along. For every one who neglects to use his talent assuredly loses it, just as we lose the use of any limb, or of any faculty, which we neglect to use; while others, who are making a faithful use of their talents, are continually stepping in to take the place of such as forfeit theirs through their sloth.

30. "The unprofitable servant." Mark his condemnation. It is not that he had done those things which he ought not to have done, but only that he had *left undone* those things which he ought to have done. It is for sins of *omission*, not for sins of commission, that he is condemned. So, farther on, the condemnation of those on the left hand in the great judgment is "Inasmuch as ye *did it not*" (45.). Surely among the moral upright and respectable there are many "unprofitable servants"!

31—46. "The great Judgment of all nations.

31. "When the Son of man" &c. This marvellous description of the great Judgment has sometimes been carelessly called the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats, from the figure used in the next verse to represent the separation of the assembled nations into two great companies. This figure is confined to a few words, and to the one single act which it represents, so that the *whole* description is in no sense a parable. It is a picture, drawn by the only Hand that could draw it faithfully, of the wondrous Judgment of the last day. Yet we are sure that it is only (so to speak) a slight sketch or outline of the scene it describes, since neither can human words bring that scene in all its reality before us, nor is it our Lord's purpose to do so. His purpose is to bring out clearly one of the great principles which will guide His judgment, and not to satisfy our curiosity by unveiling the details of the awful scene. Together with the present description must be read St. John's account of the vision revealed to him of the same great judgment (Rev. xx. 12—15.). In some particulars the interpretation of the present passage must depend upon the interpretation of that (*See Note below on "All nations."*).

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32. "*All nations.*" Four interpretations are given to these words. 1. They are by some understood as meaning all *Christian* nations, this judgment being supposed to be confined to these, and no mention to be made in Scripture of a judgment of the heathen. 2 They are by others understood in precisely an opposite sense, as

and [u] He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats: A.D. 30.

33 and He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.

34 Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of My Father, [x] inherit the kingdom [y] prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

35 [z] for I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink: [a] I was a stranger, and ye took Me in:

36 [b] naked, and ye clothed Me: I was sick, and

[u] Ezek. 20. 38. & 34. 17, 20. ch. 13. 49.

[x] Rom. 8. 17. 1 Pet. 1. 4, 9. & 3. 9. Rev. 21. 7.

[y] ch. 20. 23. Mark 10. 40. 1 Cor. 2. 9. Heb. 11. 16.

[z] Isai. 58. 7. Ezek. 18. 7. James 1. 27.

[a] Heb. 13. 2. 3 John 5.

[b] James 2. 15, 16.

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34. "The King." This is the only place in which our Lord calls Himself a King, though He assents to Pilate's question, "Art Thou "the King of the Jews?" (xxvii. 11.), and claims "All power . . in "heaven and in earth" after His resurrection (xxviii. 18.). Compare St. John's vision of the "Word of God," who hath on His vesture and "on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD "OF LORDS" (Rev. xix. 16.).

"Prepared for you." That kingdom has been designed from everlasting for God's saints. They are made heirs of it in their Baptism. Here we see them entering into possession. Yet we dare not forget that many an heir forfeits his inheritance (See Heb. iv. 1—11.).

35. "For I was an hungred," &c. The "Ten Virgins" taught the blessedness of inward grace; the 'Talents' taught the blessedness of a faithful use of God's gifts; here we are taught the blessedness of acts of charity. Each unfolds to us a different principle on which our judgment will depend, and this in order to bring the one point as forcibly as possible to our consciences. It would be a great error to take any one of these three passages, and to suppose that the one point it puts forward is the *only* one which will be brought into judgment. We must not only *compare* Scripture with Scripture, but also *combine* Scripture with Scripture, if we would know the truth.

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meaning all *heathen* nations (the word for "nations" being that used by the Jews for 'Gentiles'), this judgment being supposed to be that of the heathen world, while the parables of the Ten Virgins and the Talents represent that of Christians. 3. A third class of interpreters understand the words in the fullest sense, as including both *Christians* and *heathen*, and the judgment as representing one general judgment of all mankind. 4. The fourth interpretation is that of those who believe in a literal earthly millennium, and who hold that, this judgment being at the close of that period, the "nations" here are both all the heathen, and with them those from among Christian nations, who were not sharers in Christ's millennial reign. Since our Lord does not interpret the words for us, we may well be content to leave them in doubt, and not to mix up hidden matters with the plain practical teaching of the passage. It may however be said that the third of the above meanings best agrees with the general teaching of holy Scripture, and of the Church; while the fourth is founded upon the literal interpretation of one single passage (Rev. xx.), and that a most mysterious and difficult one, and one interpreted in a very different sense from the above by many of the wisest and soundest writers of all ages (See on Rev. xx.).

34. "*The kingdom.*" See on xiii. 43.

A.D. 30. ye visited Me: [c] I was in prison, and ye came
[c] 2 Tim. 1. 16. unto Me.

37 Then shall the righteous answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungred, and fed *Thee*? or thirsty, and gave *Thee* drink?

38 When saw we Thee a stranger, and took *Thee* in? or naked, and clothed *Thee*?

39 Or when saw we Thee sick, or in prison, and came unto Thee?

40 And the King shall answer and say unto them,
[d] Prov. 14. 31. & 19. 17. ch. 10. 42. Mark 9. 41. Heb. 6. 10. Verily I say unto you, [d] Inasmuch as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done *it* unto Me.

41 Then shall He say also unto them on the left
[e] Ps. 6. 8. ch. 7. 23. Luke 13. 27. hand, [e] Depart from Me, ye cursed, [f] into everlasting fire, prepared for [g] the devil and his angels:
[f] ch. 13. 40, 42. [g] 2 Pet. 2. 4. Jude 6. 42 for I was an hungred, and ye gave Me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink:

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37. "**Lord, when saw we Thee**" &c. Even those who best have known their Lord's loving acceptance of acts of mercy, and the blessedness of doing good, may well speak thus. To them it would seem presumption to count every little act of self-denying charity as done unto Him. It is too great an honour for them to venture to claim it. They rather leave it for Him to bestow. Thus, remembering the littleness and unworthiness of all they have done, and hearing the greatness and blessedness of the acts the King ascribes to them, they humbly ask, 'Lord, when can we have done all this?'

40. "**Inasmuch as ye have done it**" &c. How wonderful is the privilege and blessedness of almsgiving! To minister to the poor is to minister to Christ. Even the "cup of cold water" shall not lose its reward (See on x. 40—42.).

"**These My brethren.**" Thus graciously does the everlasting Son make Himself one with us. He who came that He "should taste "death for every man . . is not ashamed to call them brethren" (Heb. ii. 9, 11.).

41. "**Depart from Me,**" &c. The difference in form between the blessing and the curse is very remarkable. Observe; the former has "ye blessed *of My Father*"; the latter simply "ye cursed": for God is the Author of blessings, but man brings the curse upon himself. Again the former speaks of the "kingdom prepared *for you*"; the latter of the "fire prepared *for the devil and his angels*." It is God's good pleasure to give us the kingdom. He designs it for us, and elects us to it. But it is not His good pleasure that any should perish. They that are cast into the fire are not created for that end, but reject God's mercy, and make hell to be their "own place" (Acts i. 25.), by making themselves fit only for hell.

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41. "*His angels.*" See Eph. vi. 12.

43 I was a stranger, and ye took Me not in: naked, and ye clothed Me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited Me not. A.D. 30.

44 Then shall they also answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto Thee?

45 Then shall He answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, [h] Inasmuch as ye did *it* not to one of the least of these, ye did *it* not to Me.

46 And [i] these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

[h] Prov. 14. 31. & 17. 5. Zech. 2. 8. Acts 9. 5.

[i] Dan. 12. 2. John 5. 29. Rom. 2. 7, &c.

CHAPTER XXVI.

1 *The rulers conspire against Christ.* 6 *The woman anointeth His head.* 14 *Judas selleth Him.* 17 *Christ eateth the passover:* 26 *instituteth His holy supper:* 36 *prayeth in the garden:* 47 *and being betrayed with a kiss,* 57 *is carried to Caiaphas,* 69 *and denied of Peter.*

AND it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, He said unto His disciples,

2 [a] Ye know that after two days is *the feast of*

[a] John 13. 1.

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45. "Inasmuch as ye did it not." Well does our Church in our daily Confession teach us to say, "We have left undone those things "which we ought to have done" (See on 30.).

CHAPTER XXVI.

1—5. Christ foretells, and the Jews plot, His death.

St. Mark xiv. 1, 2. St. Luke xxii. 1, 2.

1. "All these sayings." These were our Lord's last discourses, with the exception of those uttered privately to the Apostles during the night before His Death (which are contained in St. John xiv—xvi.), and those which He spoke to the disciples only after His Resurrection.

We now enter upon the great history of the Passion of our Lord. Hitherto He has been chiefly seen as Prophet: He is now to display His Priestly office, and to make atonement for His people. Let us draw nigh with reverence, for it is holy ground.

2. "Ye know." Our Lord had so plainly foretold His sufferings that the disciples could not fail to understand Him (See on xx. 18.). It appears from the present verse that He had also taught the disciples to connect His Crucifixion with the time of the Passover. This would help them to see in their Lord's Sacrifice the fulfilment of the most remarkable of all the Old Testament types. "Christ *our Passover* is "sacrificed for us" (1 Cor. v. 7.).

"After two days." These words were probably spoken on the Wednesday in the Holy Week.

44, "*Minister.*" See on xx. 26.

A.D. 30. the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.

b Ps. 2. 2. John 11. 47. Acts 4. 25, &c.

3 [b]Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas,

4 and consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill *Him.*

5 But they said, Not on the feast *day*, lest there be an uproar among the people.

c John 11. 1, 2. d ch. 21. 17.

6 ¶ [c]Now when Jesus was in [d]Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper,

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3. "Chief priests," &c. This verse describes the assembling of the Jewish Council, called the Sanhedrin, which consisted of the chief priests (See on ii. 4.), the heads of the twenty-four courses of priests, with certain Scribes, and learned men. It had a president, who was frequently (as on the present occasion) the high-priest. Jewish tradition affirms that it consisted of seventy one members. It had considerable powers, but these had been lessened since the conquest of Palestine by the Romans, who took from the Sanhedrin the power of capital punishment (See St. John xviii. 31.).

4. "Kill Him." This they could not do, except with the consent of the Roman governor, which they no doubt expected easily to obtain. In the case of St. Stephen either the Council acted illegally, or else the stoning of the Martyr was the work of a furious mob, which could not be restrained by law (See Acts vii. 57, 58.).

5. "Not on the feast day." It will be noticed that the word "*day*" is printed in Italics in our English Bible, which shows that it is not in the Greek, but was added by the translators. It would be more correct to translate 'not during the feast,' which would extend the words to the whole week. Immense crowds collected at Jerusalem for the Passover, and there was often a fear of some disturbance, which may account for Pilate being in Jerusalem at this time, since his place of residence was Cæsarea (See on xxvii. 2.).

6—13. The Anointing by Mary of Bethany.

St. Mark xiv. 3—9. St. John xii. 1—8.

6. "Simon the leper." That is, who *had been* a leper. It is not improbable that he had been healed by Christ. It appears from Martha's serving (St. John xii. 2.) that this Simon was an intimate friend, if not a relative or connection, of Lazarus and his sisters. He was doubtless called "Simon the leper" to distinguish him from the many others of the same name.

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6. "*Now when Jesus was in Bethany*," &c. As to the *time* of this anointing see *Note* on xxi. 1. The word "Now" is not in the Greek, and is only used to introduce a new subject.

There can be little doubt that the anointing here related (and the account of which is almost word for word the same in St. Mark) is the same with that related in St. John xii. There are differences in the two accounts, but no contradictions. In fact the two accounts

7 there came unto Him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on His head, as He sat *at meat*. A.D. 30.

8 But when His disciples saw *it*, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose *is* this waste?

9 For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor.

10 When Jesus understood *it*, He said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon Me.

11 [e] For ye have the poor always with you; but [f] Me ye have not always.

[e] Deu. 15. 11.
[f] See chap. 18. 20. & 28. 20. John 13. 33. & 14. 19. & 16. 5, 28. & 17. 11.

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7. "**A woman.**" From St. John we learn that this was Mary, and from the way in which her name is brought in it is plain that she was Mary the sister of Lazarus and Martha. It is quite impossible then that she should be the same as the woman mentioned by St. Luke, who was "a sinner" (See *Note* on 6.). It is observable that Lazarus is never mentioned in the first three Gospels.

"**An alabaster box.**" Alabaster is a kind of white spar, not unlike white marble, but half-transparent. Very precious ointments, such as "spikenard" (St. Mark.), were sold in small vases or boxes of this material, sealed up to ensure purity, which would account for the breaking of the box, as related by St. Mark.

8. "**His disciples.**" Judas Iscariot, as we learn from St. John, was the one who openly complained, though others may have thought the anointing a waste of money.

9. "**Sold for much, and given to the poor.**" So men often speak, when they see large sums of money spent in other ways which the spender believes to be to the glory of God. By our Lord's gracious acceptance of this woman's loving act He gives His sanction and approval to other channels of self-denying charity besides that of giving to the poor, already so highly blest and honoured (See on xxv. 40.). The true source of Judas' murmuring is revealed in St. John.

11. "**Me ye have not always.**" That is, in the flesh; for in spirit He is with His Church always, even unto the end.

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only fill up and complete one another. St. Matt. tells us in whose house the event took place; St. John that Lazarus was one of the guests and that Martha served. St. Matt. only mentions a "woman"; St. John says it was Mary. St. Matt. names the murmuring of the "disciples"; St. John names the one who murmured. St. Matt. mentions the anointing of Christ's *Head*; St. John of His *Feet* (Mary doubtless anointed both.). On the other hand, there can be equally little doubt that the anointing related by St. Luke (vii. 36—50.) is a *different* event from that before us. The time, the character of the woman, the conversation which took place, are all different. There is no mention of Bethany by St. Luke; and, except that the name of the host, Simon, is the same on both occasions (which is not very remarkable, seeing how common a name Simon was among the Jews), and that the woman in each case used an "alabaster box of ointment" (probably a common form in which costly ointments were sold), there is nothing to make us believe the events the same. Alford rightly points out that an action of this sort, favourably received by our Lord, was very likely to be repeated.

7. "*As He sat at meat.*" See on St. Luke vii. 36.

A.D. 30.

12 For in that she hath poured this ointment on My body, she did *it* for My burial.

13 Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, *there* shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.

14 ¶ [g] Then one of the twelve, called [h] Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests,

15 and said *unto them*, [i] What will ye give me, and I will deliver Him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.

16 And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him.

[g] John 13. 2, 30.
[h] ch. 10. 4.
[i] Zech. 11. 12. ch. 27. 3.

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12. **"For My burial."** It is not clear whether Mary, in anointing our Lord, foresaw His approaching death. Possibly she was unconscious of the meaning He put upon her act. Even had she foreseen it clearly, it would have been strange to anoint the living Body with the ointment used for the dead. It would be more natural to suppose that she anointed Christ out of pure love and desire to do Him honour, and that He then declared the fitness of her act as foreshadowing His approaching Burial.

13. **"Wheresoever" &c.** The fulfilment of this promise is ever before our eyes, and we have in it a perpetual memorial of the blessedness of gifts of self-denying love to Christ.

14—16. The bargain of Judas with the Chief-priests.

St. Mark xiv. 10, 11. St. Luke xxii. 3—6.

14. **"Went unto the chief priests."** Observe the awful wickedness of the traitor. It is no sudden temptation under which he falls. He deliberately seeks the opportunity first of selling, and then of betraying, his Divine Master. This is the crowning act of a course of covetousness and dishonesty.

15. **"Thirty pieces of silver."** This paltry sum, only a few pounds of our money, was the legally appointed compensation to be paid to a master for the accidental loss of his slave (Ex. xxi. 32.). Joseph was sold to the Ishmeelites for "twenty pieces of silver" (Gen. xxxvii. 28.). It is often wondered how Judas could agree to commit his fearful crime for so small a sum. But sin and folly often go hand in hand. Besides we need not suppose that covetousness was the only motive which led Judas to his fall.

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14. "*Then.*" This, as we have seen (*Note* on xxi. 1.), does not connect the following words with what goes next before, but rather with verse 5.; the account of the anointing being given by St. Matthew and St. Mark where it is as connecting it with the covetousness of Judas. It seems as though the murmuring of the traitor about the waste of the ointment was the last step in the course of sin which ended in the betrayal of His Master. After that time he probably resolved upon the fatal deed. The bargain with the chief-priests seems to have taken place on the Wednesday in Holy Week.

17 ¶ [k] Now the first *day* of the *feast of* unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto Him, A. D. 30. [k] Exod. 12. 6, 18.

17—19. The disciples sent to prepare the Passover.

St. Mark xiv. 12—16. St. Luke xxii. 7—13.

17. "The first day" &c. This was the Thursday in Holy Week, and consequently the day before the Crucifixion. The sending of the disciples—"Peter and John" (St. Luke xxii. 8.)—no doubt took place

17. "*The first day of the feast*" *&c.* Few questions have caused more discussion, or are more difficult to answer, than those raised by these words. The difficulty is as follows. St. Matthew (here and 19.), St. Mark (xiv. 12, 14.), and St. Luke (xxii. 7, 11, 13.), all speak as though the evening on which our Lord ate the paschal supper with His Apostles was the ordinary and regular day for the eating of the passover. On the other hand St. John (xiii. 1, 29. xviii. 28, 39. xix. 14.) seems to speak as though the *next* day,—that is, the Friday,—was the correct day. It should be observed that there is no ground for thinking that the passover might be eaten at any other time than on the *evening after* the 14th day of the first month. Thus the point to be settled turns upon this question, 'Was the Thursday or the Friday in that particular year 'the 14th day of the first month?' There are two main explanations given, according as the Thursday or the Friday is taken as the right day for the killing and eating of the passover. 1. We will suppose that the Friday was the right day for the paschal feast. This is the more ancient view, and has the advantage of bringing the Crucifixion to the very day and hour of the slaying of the paschal lamb, which was so wonderful a type of "Christ our Passover." But in this case our Lord's paschal supper must have been held a day before the proper time; and, though there would be ample reason for thus celebrating the feast before the time, yet there is a difficulty in supposing that our Lord would so offend the Jewish observers of the law, as well as that the slaying of the lamb, and other ceremonies, would have been permitted before the legal day. 2. Let us suppose, on the other hand, that the Thursday was the legal day, according to the seemingly plain language of the first three Evangelists. Then, though our Lord did not die at the time of the slaying of the paschal lamb, yet He did institute the holy Sacrament of His death in the very day and hour of the ancient passover. The difficulty in this view is, of course, to explain the language of St. John, which seems to speak of the passover as not yet over on the Friday. Perhaps the passages may be explained as follows:—St. John xiii. 1: The words "before the feast of the passover" belong to the particular act which follows, namely the washing of the Apostles' feet, or, more exactly, to the words "He riseth from supper," and this was certainly *before* the Paschal meal, "supper "being ended" being a wrong translation (See on the passage itself). xiii. 29: "The "feast" here may be taken of the whole paschal week. xviii. 28: "That they "might eat the passover" may in the same way be taken in a wide sense,—not of the eating of the paschal *lamb* so much as of the continued observance of the feast, which lasted for a whole week. xviii. 39: This may most readily be taken as referring to the *whole* passover feast of eight days. xix. 14: The "preparation of "the passover" may mean simply the 'Friday of the passover week,' the "preparation" being the constant name for Friday, because on that day was made the preparation for the weekly sabbath (The word is distinctly so used in St. Mark xv. 42.). It is worth considering whether St. John, writing after the destruction of Jerusalem, and the ceasing of the regular passover in that city, is not more likely to use the word "passover" in its wider sense of the *whole* feast, than of the one special act of the eating of the lamb. The second explanation certainly seems the easier; but perhaps authorities are stronger for the first. It is natural to enquire whether the actual date cannot be made out. This, of course, would settle the question; but it cannot be ascertained positively. The best calculations however seem to point to the first explanation. Several other explanations have been suggested, but the above appear most deserving of consideration. [Those who are anxious to go more deeply into the question are referred to Ellicott's Lectures on the 'Life of our 'Lord,' Prescott's 'Every Day Scripture 'Difficulties,' and Stier's 'Words of the 'Lord Jesus' (upon St. John xiii. 1—20), in favour of the first explanation; and Andrews' 'Life of our Lord upon the 'earth,' in favour of the second].

In strictness the "first day of the feast "of unleavened bread," was the day *after* the killing and eating of the lamb, but as the Jews had to put away all leaven on that day in preparation for the feast, they popularly called it by the above name.

A.D. 30. Where wilt Thou that we prepare for Thee to eat the passover?

18 And He said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the passover at thy house with My disciples.

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from Bethany, where our Lord seems to have spent the day before in retirement, while the Jewish council plotted against Him, and Judas made his frightful covenant to betray Him.

"The passover." In order to understand the following events, it is necessary to explain the manner of celebrating the passover, or "feast of "unleavened bread," among the Jews. The history of the first institution of the feast should be read in Ex. xii. The paschal lamb, which was to be "without blemish, a male of the first year," was chosen by each head of a family on the tenth day of the first month, and "kept up" till the fourteenth day, on which day "in the evening" (See on xiv. 15.) it was slain in the outer court of the Temple at Jerusalem, no bone of it being broken, and the blood being sprinkled on the altar. It was afterwards eaten the same night by households, or families, or parties made up for the purpose, the number in every case being not less than ten nor more than twenty. The lamb was eaten with unleavened bread, and bitter herbs; and the feast was accompanied by many ceremonies. It began with prayer; after which a cup of wine mixed with water was tasted by all. Then the lamb was eaten, a son of the master of the house, or some young person present, first asking the meaning of the feast, and being answered by the head of the party 'In memory of the coming out of the 'land of Egypt.' Then the 113th and 114th Psalms were sung (See on xxi. 9.). After this the unleavened bread, in the form of thin flat cakes, was eaten, dipped into a broth made of the bitter herbs mingled in water. The feast concluded with the passing of the cup to all present at stated times during the singing of the remaining Passover Psalms, namely the 115th to the 118th inclusive. This however was only the beginning of the passover (taken in its wider sense for the whole festival); for it continued for seven days afterwards, each day being marked by its solemn ceremonies and observances. The first and last days of the seven were especially solemn (See also on St. John xix. 31.). The ceremonies of the second day of the feast (See *Note* on xxviii. 1.) were remarkable. On that day the first-fruits of the barley harvest were brought to the temple, and there waved by the priest before the Lord; and it was not lawful for any man to begin to reap till a blessing had been thus solemnly invoked upon the harvest.

18. "Go into the city to such a man." This direction is more fully given in St. Mark and St. Luke. The disciples were led to the house by a sign appointed by our Lord.

"The Master saith." It is probable from these words that the man to whom they were to be spoken was a believer, and so would be ready to obey them (See on xxi. 3.). Plainly the disciples did not know to whom they were being sent. The man was therefore probably a secret believer.

"My time is at hand." As these words were to be repeated to the Master of the house, it is probable that he would understand them. They mean, 'My time to suffer and die is at hand.'

19 And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and they made ready the passover. A.D. 30.

20 ¶ Now when the even was come, He sat down with the twelve.

21 And as they did eat, He said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray Me.

22 And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto Him, Lord, is it I?

23 And He answered and said, [1]He that dippeth *his* hand with Me in the dish, the same shall betray Me. [1] Ps. 41. 9. John 13. 18.

"I will keep the passover at thy house." Blessed the house chosen for such a feast! But it must be made ready for the visit of the Divine Master. What saith He to us? "If any man hear My voice, and "open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he "with Me" (Rev. iii. 20.). Are we then making ready?

20—25. Announcement of the betrayal.

St. Mark xiv. 17—21. St. Luke xxii. 21—23. St. John xiii. 18, 21—30.

20. "Sat down." Literally, 'reclined.' The Jews were commanded at the first to eat the passover standing, with their loins girded, their shoes on their feet, and their staves in their hands, to remind them of their hasty departure out of Egypt. But when they were settled in their own land, they adopted the ordinary reclining posture (See on St. John xiii. 23.) as fitly marking their peaceful possession of the promised land. By our Lord's adoption of this general usage He shows respect to the ordinances of man in things indifferent. Our Church teaches that "the Church hath power to decree rites and ceremonies" (Article xx.).

22. "Lord, is it I?" The consciences of all but Judas must have answered this question for themselves. No other of the Apostles could have thought himself capable of such a crime. Yet they did not suspect Judas, and none but the twelve were present. Thus each one would feel, 'If it must be one of us, why should I think another more likely to act 'thus than myself?' And so, in all humility and simplicity, yet with some little dread, each asks, "Is it I?"

23. "He answered" &c. This answer is quite distinct from the sign given to St. John (St. John xiii. 26.), and is only a general expression, referring to the prophecy, "He that eateth bread with Me hath lifted "up his heel against Me" (St. John xiii. 18. quoted from Ps. xli. 9.), and so not intended to point out Judas as the traitor. St. Mark has, "One of you which eateth with Me," and "One of the twelve that "dippeth with Me in the dish", and certainly these expressions mean only '*One* of those who are eating with Me of the same dish,' and do not mean '*That* one who is at this moment helping himself from the same

A. D. 30. 24 The Son of man goeth [m] as it is written of Him: but [n] woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born.

25 Then Judas, which betrayed Him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said.

[m] Ps. 22. Isai. 53. Dan. 9. 26. Mark 9. 12. Luke 24. 25, 26, 46. Acts 17. 2. 3. & 26. 22, 23. 1 Cor. 15. 3.

[n] John 17. 12.

'dish with Me.' Had the words borne this latter meaning, it seems most improbable that the rest of the Apostles should have failed to understand why Judas left the room (St. John xiii. 28.), for the answer seems made publicly to all. The announcement of the betrayal is given more fully by St. John, who himself took part in the events.

Let us not pass by this solemn scene without applying it to our own hearts. Are there none of us who have eaten and drunk with Christ, and yet are ready to betray Him,—who have knelt at His holy Feast, and yet in our lives have denied Him? Let each solemnly ask the question, "Master, is it I?"

24. "The Son of man goeth" &c. Man's sin oftentimes works out God's decrees. Yet the sin is not thereby lessened. Evil is no less evil because God oftentimes brings good out of it. The hands of the Jews were wicked in taking and crucifying Christ, even though He was delivered up to them "by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of "God," as St. Peter declared on the Day of Pentecost (Acts ii. 23. See also the question and answer, Rom. iii. 7, 8.).

"It had been good for that man" &c. Observe how even in His solemn prayer to His Father Jesus calls Judas "the son of perdition" (St. John xvii. 12.). How awful to think of one so near to Christ and yet so lost! That such a thing should be possible is a terrible warning to all such as have great privileges, and much outward nearness to Christ and holy things.

25. "Master, is it I?" This question of Judas was evidently uttered amid the dismay and confusion caused by our Lord's announcement, and the answer to it, "Thou hast said," which signifies, 'Thou hast said truly,' was probably spoken to, and heard by, Judas alone, who is thought by many to have reclined on the other side of our Lord from St. John. But why did Judas, who knew his own wicked intention, ask such a question at all? Probably because the rest did, and he wished to assume the appearance of innocence, and felt that silence would look like a guilty conscience.

Many suppose that Judas went out at this point, and thus was not present at the sacramental rite which followed. This is the opinion of many modern commentators, but it was the ancient belief that he was present and a partaker of the holy rite. Our Church plainly adopts the more ancient view in the first Exhortation on giving notice of Holy Communion, in which impenitent persons are warned not to come to the holy Table, "lest, after the taking of that holy Sacrament, the devil "enter into you, as he entered into Judas, and fill you full of all ini-"quities, and bring you to destruction both of body and soul." (See farther in *Note* on St. Luke xxii. 21.)

26 ¶ And as they were eating, [o] Jesus took bread, A.D. 30.
and [2] blessed *it*, and brake *it*, and gave *it* to the [o] 1 Cor. 11. 23, 24, 25.
disciples, and said, Take, eat; [p] this is My body. [p] 1 Cor. 10. 16.

[2] Many Greek copies have, *gave thanks*. See Mark 6. 41.

26—29. The Institution of the Lord's Supper.

St. Mark xiv. 22—25. St. Luke xxii. 19, 20.

26. "Bread." This bread would be the unleavened cake used in the passover. Christ exalts the *bread* into the chief place in the new paschal feast, instead of the *lamb*, which held the chief place in the old. Why is this? Doubtless because the types and shadows were to cease when the Real Sacrifice was come. There was to be no more shedding of blood when once His all-prevailing Blood was shed. There must be nothing which might cast a doubt upon the all-sufficiency of *That*. The sacrament was sometimes called in ancient times the "unbloody sacrifice," because, while in it is represented and shown forth the Sacrifice of Christ, yet it is without shedding of blood. Observe the use made by St. Paul of the *one* loaf, broken and divided among all, to signify the unity of Christians (1 Cor. x. 17.).

"Blessed it." St. Luke has "gave thanks," but the meaning is nearly the same. The offering of thanks to God over the bread blesses and hallows it. The Lord's Supper has from the earliest times borne the name of the 'Eucharist,' which means the 'giving of thanks': and this name well expresses the character which properly belongs to this holy Sacrament,—that namely of a thankful and joyful service.

"Brake it." This signifies the breaking, or wounding, of Christ's holy Body on the Cross, and also the partaking by many of the one sacred Food. The Sacrament was in primitive times generally called the 'Breaking of bread' (See St. Luke xxiv. 35. Acts ii. 42, 46. xx. 7.).

"This is My Body." More controversy has arisen upon these words than upon any others in the Bible. It is neither desirable, nor possible, to enter into this vast controversy here. The best commentary upon our Lord's words is to be found in His own wonderful discourse in St. John vi., and in the thoughtful study of the words of His Apostle St. Paul (1 Cor. x. 16, 17. xi. 23—29.). Next to these perhaps no more valuable statement of doctrine upon this sacred subject exists than that contained in the last five answers in the Church Catechism. Our Church holds a middle course between the literal, carnal, interpretation of the words "This is My Body" by the Church of Rome, and the shallow view on the other side which sees in the Holy Communion no more than a commemoration or representation of the Lord's Death. We hold that Christ really gives His Body and His Blood to the faithful, who do really receive the same, and are thereby spiritually nourished and strengthened. *How* this is we know not, nor would we curiously enquire. Thus while we shrink from the awful doctrine of a *carnal* partaking of Christ, we believe in a *real* partaking of Christ. We do not say that the holy Sacrament is only a means whereby we *approach Christ*, so as spiritually to feed upon Him by faith. We rather say it is a means whereby Christ *approaches us*, and communicates Himself to us as our spiritual food and sustenance. Moreover that He is truly present in His holy Sacrament we most surely believe.

A.D. 30. 27 And He took the cup, and gave thanks, and
q See Exod. 24. 8. Lev. 17. 11. gave *it* to them, saying, Drink ye all of it;
r Jer. 31. 31. 28 for q this is My blood r of the new testa-
s ch. 20. 28. Rom. 5. 15. Heb. 9. 22. ment, which is shed s for many for the remission
t Luke 22. 18. of sins.
29 But t I say unto you, I will not drink hence-

The Romish doctrine of Transubstantiation, which teaches that by consecration there is a conversion of the whole substance of the bread and wine into the substance of Christ's Body and Blood, is strongly opposed to the fact that, when our Lord said the words "This is My "Body", He was present *in His natural Body* before the eyes of the Apostles, and it is not conceivable that He gave them of that natural Body to eat. If it be said in answer that Christ's Body is now a *spiritual* Body, and that therefore, what could not be then, can be now, this is to deny that the Apostles at that time partook of the real Sacrament.

27. "Drink ye all of it." It is difficult to suppose these words to have narrower limits than the "Take, eat," before. Yet the Roman Church denies the cup to the laity.

28. "This is My Blood of the new testament." In St. Luke and 1 Cor. xi. the words are, "This cup is the new testament in My Blood." The meaning differs very little. "Testament" means the same as 'covenant'; and every covenant was ratified, or made binding, by the shedding of blood. The blood of the paschal lamb, sprinkled on the door-posts, and afterwards on the altar, was the blood of the *old* testament (or covenant), by which God pledged Himself to save those who thus marked themselves as His. The Blood of Christ is the Blood of the *new* covenant, by which God pledges Himself to save those who through it seek salvation. The other expression, "This cup is the new testament "in My Blood," would mean, 'This cup conveys to you the blessings of 'the new covenant, which is sealed and confirmed, not by the sprinkling 'of the blood of the paschal lamb, but by My Blood shed for you.'

"For the remission of sins." It is the *shedding*, not the *partaking*, of Christ's Blood which is here said to be "for the remission of sins." Yet, inasmuch as the holy Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ perpetually *applies* to the faithful the one eternal Sacrifice, we doubt not that, as the first shedding, so also the faithful partaking, of the precious Blood of Christ is "for the remission of sins." The shedding of Christ's Blood purchases for us once for all,—the partaking of it seals to us individually,—"the remission of sins." Thus too we find that *both* Sacraments are "for the remission of sins"; Baptism, in the case of infants, being the seal of the remission of original sin, the holy Communion the seal of the remission of actual sin.

29. "I will not drink henceforth" &c. This is a most mysterious saying. It certainly refers to our Lord's coming at the last day, and to the joy of the righteous, already figured to us under the image of a marriage feast (xxii. 10. and xxv. 10.). It appears however to speak

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28. "*For many.*" See on xx. 28.
29. "*I will not drink*" &c. As to the question at what point in the events of the last Supper these words were uttered, see *Note* on St. Luke xxii. 18.

forth of this fruit of the vine, [u] until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom. A.D. 30. [u] Acts 10. 41.

30 ¶ And when they had sung an [2] hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives. [2] Or, *psalm.*

31 Then saith Jesus unto them, [x] All ye shall [y] be offended because of Me this night: for it is written, [x] John 16. 32. [y] ch. 11. 6.

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of something *real*, not figurative only; and this has led some to consider the saying fulfilled by our Lord's eating and drinking with His disciples after His Resurrection. But this is surely not a sufficient account of our Lord's mysterious words. It is better to look for some blessed fulfilment of them in the Resurrection-life. It should be observed that in St. Luke's Gospel they come before the Institution of the Lord's Supper, and thus they appear to refer not so much to the eating and drinking in that holy rite, as to the whole Paschal feast during which they were spoken. Indeed the words could hardly apply specially to the sacramental rite, since it is most improbable that our Lord Himself partook of that bread and wine. They seem to be prophetic of a new and glorious Paschal feast in the triumphant kingdom hereafter (See on the passage in St. Luke.).

30—35. Conversation on going out towards the Mount of Olives.

St. Mark xiv. 26—31. St. Luke xxii. 31—34. St. John xiii. 36—38.

30. "When they had sung an hymn." There can be little doubt that this refers to the Passover Psalms (See on 17.). No one can read these Psalms (especially cxviii.) without seeing how many portions must have been singularly suitable to our Lord this night. It is surely a fact of much interest to us that our Lord on this occasion joined in the singing of psalms. He shows His love for the Book of Psalms yet more remarkably on the Cross (See on xxvii. 46.).

The great discourses in St. John (xiv—xvii.) would fall in here, between the singing of the "hymn," and the going into the Mount of Olives.

31. "All ye shall be offended." This was fulfilled when "all the "disciples forsook Him and fled" (56.).

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31. The exact time and place of the following conversation with St. Peter is not quite clear. St. Matthew and St. Mark speak as if it were *after* "they "went out into the Mount of Olives": St. Luke and St. John as if it were *before* they left the "upper room". Many accordingly suppose that our Lord foretold St. Peter's denial twice in the same evening, first in the "upper room" and afterwards on the way to the Mount of Olives. But we have often had occasion to remark that the Evangelists do not study to present the events they relate in the exact order of their occurrence (See *Note* on x. 5.), and it appears probable in the present instance that St. Luke and St. John mention the prophecy of St. Peter's denial (in the midst of other conversations of this eventful night) a little before it actually took place.

A.D. 30. **I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.** Zech. 13. 7.

z ch. 28. 7, 10, 16. Mark 16. 7. 32 But after I am risen again, z I will go before you into Galilee

33 Peter answered and said unto Him, Though all *men* shall be offended because of Thee, *yet* will I never be offended.

a John 13. 38. 34 Jesus said unto him, a Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny Me thrice.

35 Peter said unto Him, Though I should die with Thee, yet will I not deny Thee. Likewise also said all the disciples.

b John 18. 1. 36 ¶ b Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.

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32. "But after I am risen again," &c. That is, although the Shepherd would be smitten and the flock scattered, yet still He would gather them together again, and go before them, as their Shepherd, into Galilee (See xxviii. 7, 10, 16.).

33. "Peter answered" &c. The parallel passages in all four Gospels must be read together in order to gain a full conception of this conversation. Possibly the order of it may be as follows. Our Lord having spoken (St. John) of going away, St. Peter is led to declare that he will follow Him even to death. This may have led our Lord to declare (St. Matthew and St. Mark) that all the Apostles would be offended because of Him that night, with which saying He may have coupled His announcement (St. Luke) that Satan had desired to "sift" them "as wheat," the words being addressed specially to St. Peter. St. Peter would then repeat his rash declaration, and Christ would pronounce the sad prophecy of his triple denial. We may observe that St. Mark, writing probably under St. Peter's guidance (See Introduction to St. Mark), is the most precise in giving our Lord's words: "This day, "even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny Me "thrice." When in the other Gospels only *one* cock-crowing is named, we may understand it of the *second* cock-crowing, that namely early in the morning, which would probably be usually meant by the cock-crowing. The first, being in the night, would be less regarded.

We must not fail to note how self-confidence is ever the herald of an approaching fall.

36—46. The Agony in Gethsemane.

St. Mark xiv. 32—42. St. Luke xxii. 39—46.

36. Gethsemane." The name signifies an 'oil-press,' probably from there being, or having been, in this place a press or mill for preparing

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34. "*Deny Me.*" See on x. 33.

37 And He took with Him Peter and [c] the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. A.D. 30. [c] ch. 4. 21.

oil from the olives which grew on the hill above. The "garden" (St. John) lay at the foot of the Mount of Olives, in the valley of Jehoshaphat, and just across the brook Kedron. Therefore our Lord would reach it before arriving at the Mount of Olives (See on xxi. 1. *Note* on 31, and Map of Jerusalem.). As the Jews reckoned their months by the moon, beginning them with the new moon, the Passover (on the 14th day of the month) was at the full moon, and so this would be a moon-light night. Jesus and His disciples were in the habit of frequently visiting this garden (See St. Luke xxii. 39. St. John xviii. 2.).

"The disciples." Eight in number,—the eleven, that is, with the exception of the three who accompanied Jesus farther into the solitude of the garden.

37. **"Peter and the two sons of Zebedee."** These were the three chosen witnesses of their Lord's power over death in the raising of Jairus' daughter (St. Mark v. 37. St. Luke viii. 51.), and of His Transfiguration (xvii. 1, on which see Commentary.). It is possible, as has been thought by some, that our Lord took with Him these three, not only for *their* sake, that they might witness His Agony, but also in part for *His own* sake, that He might possess their sympathy in His weight of suffering. This thought may be suggested by the wish that they should watch with Him.

"Began to be sorrowful and very heavy." Here, in the Agony, even more completely than in the temptation in the wilderness, we see Christ as "very Man." It was His Human Nature, and His Human Soul, which shrank from the awful death which was now so close at hand. His *will* never faltered. But, as Man, He suffered the natural dread of death, which was a part of His self-chosen Passion. "In all "things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren" (Hebr. ii. 17. See also on xxvii. 46.). Surely we may venture to see in the Agony another furious assault of the evil one, who after his threefold temptation, three years before, "departed from Him for a season" (St. Luke iv. 13.), only to return in this more terrible form. Then he tempted by objects of desire: now by objects of terror. Then he strove to allure by unfolding a vision of "all the kingdoms of the world "and the glory of them": now he seeks to terrify through the natural dread which the clear vision of His coming Passion wrought even in the Saviour's Soul. Still we are not to think that even so terrible a death as that which Jesus was about to suffer was enough to cause the awful Agony of Gethsemane. We cannot doubt that He bore a weight of sorrow apart from that which arose from any bodily suffering. As Son of Man, His soul in that hour embraced in its infinite compassion the burden of the sins and sorrows of the whole race of man. This it was—the horror of soul, caused by the laying upon Him of the iniquity of us all,—the dreadful sense and realization of sin, and of death as the fruit of sin,—which made His righteous Soul "exceeding sorrow-"ful, even unto death," that is, so sorrow-stricken that it could bear no more and live. With the history of Gethsemane should be compared St. John's record of a foretaste of its agony in our Lord's discourse spoken a few days before (See on St. John xii. 27, 28.).

A.D. 30. 38 Then saith He unto them, [d] My soul is exceed-
[d] John 12. 27. ing sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with Me.

[e] Heb. 5. 7. 39 And He went a little farther, and fell on His
[f] John 12. 27. face, and [e] prayed, saying, [f] O My Father, if it be
[g] ch. 20. 22. possible, [g] let this cup pass from Me: nevertheless
[h] John 5. 30. & 6. 38. Phil. 2. 8. [h] not as I will, but as Thou *wilt*.

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38. "Watch with Me." Blessed they who are allowed, and who are able, to watch with Christ! This we may do in prayer and meditation. Yet how few of us can watch with Him for even half "one "hour."

39. "A little farther." "About a stone's cast" (St. Luke); and into a lonelier, and possibly darker, part of the garden.

"Fell on His face." Behold the Son of God praying in lowliest reverence of posture. If our hearts are truly praying,—if we are truly conscious of God's presence, when we pray,—we too shall "fall down, "and kneel before the Lord our Maker" (Ps. xcv. 6.). Alas that our Master should fall on His face, while we so often refuse to bend the knee!

"If it be possible," &c. By the "cup" in this wonderful prayer is meant the *bitter agony* of our Lord's Passion. It is doubtful whether this prayer is to be understood as a prayer for release from that *death* for which the Son of God came into the world, or only from the *agony* accompanying it. If from the *death* itself, we must understand the "if "it be possible" to mean 'if there be any other way of salvation for man.' In either case His Human Nature shrank from the terrors with which that His great High-priestly act was surrounded, and prayed for their passing from Him. But only *if it were possible*, that is, if it were possible without marring the eternal counsel, or opposing the perfect will, of God. Observe, in St. Luke it is, "If Thou be willing," for God's will is the law and limit of possibility. A little later Jesus would not have the "cup" pass from Him, for He said to St. Peter, who would have defended Him, "The cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?" (St. John xviii. 11.). May we not suppose that the sons of Zebedee must now have learnt a new lesson as to the meaning of our Lord's question to them, "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of?" (xx. 22.)? The path to greatness in Christ's kingdom was beginning to unfold itself more clearly. Yet possibly they were too much overcome with heaviness at this time to perceive it.

"Not as I will, but as Thou wilt." We here see the perfect submission of Christ's Human will to the Divine will (See also St. John v. 30. vi. 38.). As perfect Man, our Lord possessed a human will, and it was this human will which shrank from the terrors which were before Him. Yet, though it shrank, it never set itself against God's will. It was separate from that, but made itself one with that.

We can hardly doubt that it is of this prayer of agony that it is said that Jesus "in the days of His flesh"... "offered up prayers and supplica- "cations, with strong crying and tears, unto Him that was able to save "Him from death, and was heard in that He feared" (Hebr. v. 7.). He was "heard," and His prayer was answered: but as God often hears

40 And He cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with Me one hour? A.D. 30.

41 [i] Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak. [i] Mark 13. 33. Eph. 6. 18.

42 He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O My Father, if this cup may not pass away from Me, except I drink it, Thy will be done.

43 And He came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy.

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and answers prayer. God took not the cup from Him, but strengthened Him to drink it.

40. "What, could ye not watch" &c. Even the boldness of a Peter and the love of a John fail in this hour of trial. Yet it is from the weakness of the flesh that they fail. They are "sleeping *for sorrow*" (St. Luke.). Perhaps it is not meant that we should press the "hour" into an exact measure of time, as though our Lord's agony had already lasted an hour. It is as if He said, 'Ye, who professed your readiness 'even to die for Me, could ye not even fulfil My wish that ye should 'watch with Me one brief hour?'

41. "Watch and pray," &c. From the sleep of the Apostles Christ draws a lesson for all. It is not to them alone, but to all His people, that He says, "Watch and pray." Watchfulness and prayer are the two weapons with which His faithful soldiers and servants may best ward off the assaults of temptation.

"The spirit indeed is willing," &c. These words are to show the necessity for watching and prayer. They are not to be limited to the Apostles to whom they were spoken, though plainly first intended for them. They express a wide and general truth; and the first part of them is almost the same as if it were '*Although* the spirit is willing.' Thus we see that a willing spirit is not in itself enough. If it would be safe from falling, it must exercise itself in watchfulness and prayer. How many with good desires and good intentions fall in the hour of temptation because "the flesh is weak," and they have not sought to strengthen it by these means.

42. "O My Father," &c. We cannot but notice in this second prayer that there appears a more entire acceptance of the "cup" of suffering as being the Father's will, than appeared in the first. Possibly the continued agony of spirit,—made heavier, it may be, by the cold-heartedness and dulness of spirit of His chosen friends,—may have seemed a sufficient answer that the cup was not to pass from Him, but must be drunk to the dregs. At any rate now we have no petition except "Thy "will be done." Whatever remained of the human will which shrank from suffering, its only sign was in the meek and lowly words, "If this "cup may not pass away from Me, except I drink it." Oh blessed example for all such as are called through suffering to be conformed to the image of God's dear Son!

A. D. 30.

44 And He left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.

45 Then cometh He to His disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take *your* rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

46 Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray Me.

k Acts 1. 16.

47 ¶ And [k] while He yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people.

48 Now he that betrayed Him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is He: hold Him fast.

49 And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, Master; [l] and kissed Him.

l 2 Sam. 20. 9.

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45. "Sleep on now." This is spoken in sorrowful reproof. It is as though our Lord said, 'The time for watching with Me is over. I wake 'you from your slumbers no more. Sleep on now, if ye can and will.' Yet, even as He speaks, He adds words which must have startled the hearers into utter wakefulness. For He declares the betrayer to be at hand.

46. "Let us be going." Not to flee from, but to meet, the traitor and his band (See St. John xviii. 4.).

47—56. The Betrayal and taking of Jesus.

St. Mark xiv. 43—52. St. Luke xxii. 47—53. St. John xviii. 1—12.

47. "One of the twelve." How fearful is this! To have been so near Christ, so high in privilege, so great in office, and yet to betray Him! Let us learn by this that privileges—even the highest privileges—cannot save (See on 24.).

"A great multitude." Consisting partly of Jews, and partly of Roman soldiers, whose assistance the chief-priests and elders had obtained (See St. John xviii. 3.). We learn from St. John that the multitude, on first being told by His own lips that it was He whom they sought, "went backward and fell to the ground."

48. "Whomsoever I shall kiss." There is something very awful in the token of love being thus used as the sign of betrayal. What must have been the state of heart which could have known Jesus as Judas knew Him, and yet have thus approached Him? Doubtless many of the multitude, especially the Roman soldiers, did not know Jesus by sight, and thus this sign had been agreed upon to prevent mistake; and this would be the more needful inasmuch as it was night, though moonlight.

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44. "*The third time, saying the same words.*" See on vi. 7.

50 And Jesus said unto him, [m]Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus, and took Him. A.D. 30. [m] Ps. 41. 9. & 55. 13.

51 And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out *his* hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest's, and smote off his ear.

52 Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: [n]for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. [n] Gen. 9. 6. Rev. 13. 10.

53 Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He shall presently give Me [o]more than twelve legions of angels? [o] 2 Kin. 6. 17. Dan. 7. 10.

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50. "Friend, wherefore art thou come?" This question is not asked in order to obtain an answer, but, like that related by St. Luke, "Judas, betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss?" is meant as a reproving appeal to the conscience of the traitor:—'Think what it is 'thou hast come to do. Consider what thou hast undertaken.' The gentleness of our Lord's reproof is very marvellous.

51. "One of them." St. John tells us this was St. Peter, and also gives us the name of the high-priest's servant, whom he wounded. It is possible that the martyrdom of St. Peter before St. John's Gospel was written removed reasons which existed before for silence as to his part in this event: but St. John's acquaintance with the high-priest (St. John xviii. 15.) is sufficient to account for his being more precise in mentioning the names. How truly in accordance is this rash violence with St. Peter's whole character. He was always forward, bold, impetuous, self-confident (See on xvi. 22.). Here we see the beginning of the denial; or rather this is a sort of *first* denial of his Lord. For the servant refuses to accept his Master's Self-sacrifice. His act of carnal violence gives the denial to his Lord's Divine power. Surely it was not well to draw the sword for Him who had patiently endured the traitor's kiss.

52. "Put up again thy sword into his place." The sheath is the proper place for the sword, except when it is drawn in accordance with the will of God, in a righteous cause.

"For all they that take the sword" &c. This may mean, that all they that take the sword *unrighteously*,—that is, for vengeance, or for their own private ends, or in an unjust cause,—shall perish by the sword of justice, or, at least, deserve so to perish. In this sense our Lord's words would confirm God's primitive law, "Whoso sheddeth "man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed" (Gen. ix. 6.). But the saying may also mean simply that all who resort to violence must expect to be met by violence, bringing down on themselves the vengeance of man, as St. Peter would doubtless have done, had not Jesus healed the wounded man by a miracle (St. Luke xxii. 51.).

53. "More than twelve legions of angels." The "legion" was a division of a Roman army consisting of about six thousand men. Probably our Lord mentions "twelve," as thinking of Himself and His

A.D. 30.

54 But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled,
p that thus it must be?

55 In that same hour said Jesus to the multitudes, Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take Me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on Me.

56 But all this was done, that the q scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then r all the disciples forsook him, and fled.

57 ¶ s And they that had laid hold on Jesus led

p ver. 24. Isai. 53. 7, &c. Luke 24. 25, 44, 46.

q ver. 54. Lam. 4. 20.

r See John 18. 15.

s Luke 22. 54. John 18. 12, 13.

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eleven Apostles. One Angel destroyed a hundred and eighty-five thousand Assyrians (2 Kings xix. 35.), and another slew all the first-born of Egypt (Ex. xii. 30.). How amazing then was the power of which Jesus spoke! Yet He needed no power greater than His own. He had but to will, and His enemies would go backward and fall to the ground.

54. "But how then" &c. Behold the Lord grasping the cup He but now prayed might pass away! It was not possible: there was no other way: His Father had put the cup into His Hand, and He will drink it to the dregs (See St. John xviii. 11.).

55. "As against a thief." Thus was He "numbered with the transgressors" (Isai. liii. 12.) already. He is attacked as though He were a thief, and afterwards a murderer is preferred to Him. Yet how little like a thief was He who sat so quietly and so marvellously teaching in the Temple!

56. "Then all the disciples forsook Him, and fled." Some, at least, could not have fled far, or soon recovered themselves, for we find from St. John that St. Peter and St. John followed to the palace of the high priest (See on St. John xviii. 15.). We see here the fulfilment of our Lord's words, "All ye shall be offended because of "Me this night" (31.). If *Apostles* were so weak, what need have *we* of prayer and watching lest we forsake our Lord in the hour of danger!

57—66. Jesus before Caiaphas.

St. Mark xiv. 53—64. St. John xviii. 19—24.

57. "Caiaphas the high priest." Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas, had been high-priest till shortly before this time, but was removed from his office by the Romans. He however retained much power, and seems to have even performed at times the duties of the high-priest, while his son-in-law was in office (See on St. Luke iii. 2.). Jesus was led first to Annas, probably as a man of great influence and importance; but Annas appears shortly to have sent Him to Caiaphas (See on St. John xviii. 13, 19—24.). This taking of our Lord before Annas is omitted by the first three Evangelists.

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56. "*That the scriptures*" &c. See on i. 22.

Him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled. A.D. 30.

58 But Peter followed Him afar off unto the high priest's palace, and went in, and sat with the servants, to see the end.

59 Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put Him to death;

60 but found none: yea, though [t] many false witnesses came, *yet* found they none. At the last came [u] two false witnesses,

[t] Ps. 27. 12. & 35. 11. So Acts 6. 13.
[u] Deut. 19. 15.

61 and said, This *fellow* said, [x] I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days.

[x] ch. 27. 40. John 2. 19.

62 [y] And the high priest arose, and said unto Him, Answerest Thou nothing? what *is it which* these witness against Thee?

[y] Luke 23. 9.

63 But [z] Jesus held His peace. And the high priest answered and said unto Him, [a] I adjure Thee

[z] Isai. 53. 7. ch. 27. 12, 14.
[a] Lev. 5. 1. 1 Sam. 14. 24, 26.

"Where the scribes and the elders were assembled." This, as we find in the next verse, was in "the high priest's palace," which was not the proper place for the trial, but was probably preferred for the sake of secrecy and saving of time. By "the scribes and the elders" is meant the Jewish high council, or Sanhedrin (See on 3.), which seems to have been hastily called together at this untimely hour.

58. "Sat with the servants." St. John obtained admission for him (St. John xviii. 15.). While to us the peril in which the Apostle placed himself is very plain, we cannot forget that nothing but his great love for his Master could have led him into that dreadful scene, and that it is very probable that he was nerving himself for some great trial, and so fell by the very seeming smallness of the temptation which suddenly assailed him. Doubtless he thought he should pass among the servants for a mere chance spectator of the trial, and expected no danger from that quarter.

59. "Sought false witness." What a mockery of justice! They go through the form of trial, but the judges themselves seek men to bear false witness against Him.

60. "Found none." That is, found none which was of any use, for "their witness agreed not together": and even the two who brought forward in a false sense (probably knowing it to be a false sense) our Lord's saying about the "temple of His Body" could not agree as to His words (St. Mark.).

63. "Jesus held His peace." His answering could have done no good, for, had He explained His saying about building up the temple in three days, He would only have been accused of blasphemy. Moreover it is probable that His judges already knew His meaning (See xxvii. 63.).

"I adjure Thee." That is, 'I put Thee on Thy oath.' The false

A.D. 30. by the living God, that Thou tell us whether Thou be the Christ, the Son of God.

64 Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, [b] Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man [c] sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

65 [d] Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard His blasphemy.

66 What think ye? They answered and said, [e] He is guilty of death.

67 ¶ [f] Then did they spit in His face, and buffeted Him; and [g] others smote *Him* with [2] the palms of their hands,

b Dan. 7. 13. ch. 16. 27. & 24. 30. & 25. 31. Luke 21. 27. John 1. 51. Rom. 14. 10. 1 Thes. 4. 16. Rev. 1. 7.
c Ps. 110. 1. Acts 7. 55.
d 2 Kin. 18. 37. & 19. 1.
e Lev. 24. 16. John 19. 7.
f Isai. 50. 6. & 53. 3. ch. 27. 30.
g John 19. 3.
2 Or, *rods*.

witness was not sufficient: so Caiaphas will convict Him out of His own mouth.

64. "Thou hast said." This is a solemn form of answering 'Yes.' 'Thou hast said the truth.' Jesus does not refuse to answer a question so solemnly put, and which sums up the whole accusation against Him in a few words. To the charge of being "the Christ, the Son of God," He can but plead guilty. Silence now might be misunderstood.

"Nevertheless" &c. The word "hereafter" literally means 'hence-'forth,' or 'from this time,' so that our Lord's words can hardly be spoken only of His second coming at the last day. They seem to imply that from the very time of His condemnation and death His power and glory would begin to manifest themselves. They may perhaps be unfolded thus: 'Although thou now sittest on thy throne of power 'and judgest Me, yet after this thou shalt see Me sitting on My throne 'of power, for thou shalt see My kingdom set up in the world, and 'at last thou shalt see Me coming in the clouds of heaven as Judge 'of all the world' (See on St. John xiii. 31.).

65. "Then the high priest rent his clothes," &c. Thus Caiaphas suddenly ended the trial, possibly really shocked at what he thought was blasphemy on our Lord's part, but glad of the excuse to get the verdict against Him. He had himself before resolved on Jesus' death (See St. John xi. 49, 50. and xviii. 14.).

67, 68. The Mocking of the servants.

St. Mark xiv. 65. St. Luke xxii. 63—65.

67. "Then did they spit" &c. Who can read of these horrible acts of cruelty and insolence, and not remember the marvellous prophecy, "I gave My Back to the smiters, and My Cheeks to them that "plucked off the hair: I hid not My Face from shame and spitting" (Is. l. 6.)? St. Peter, who probably witnessed this conduct, and on whose memory every event of that awful night must have been

65. "*Blasphemy*." See on St. Mark vii. 22.

68 saying, Prophesy unto us, Thou Christ, Who is he that smote Thee? A.D. 30.

69 ¶ Now Peter sat without in the palace: and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee.

70 But he denied before *them* all, saying, I know not what thou sayest.

71 And when he was gone out into the porch, another *maid* saw him, and said unto them that were there, This *fellow* was also with Jesus of Nazareth.

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deeply graven, writes of the Master he thus disgraced, "Who, when "He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened "not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously" (1 St. Peter ii. 23.). Oh shame on us, who resent some petty injury or fancied slight, when such is the example we profess to follow!

69—75. St. Peter's denial and repentance.

St. Mark xiv. 66—72. St. Luke xxii. 54—62. St. John xviii. 13—27.

69. "Without in the palace." The word translated "palace" is literally 'hall,' and seems to mean the open paved square which formed the centre of the larger Jewish houses, and which was either open to the sky, or covered with an awning as shelter from the heat of the sun. This open space was approached by a covered passage, at the outer end of which were strong gates or doors. This passage is called the "porch" in 71, and it usually had in it a bench or seat for the porter and other servants. Round the central 'hall' or square were the chief rooms, opening into it. In one of these probably Jesus was being tried, while St. Peter sat with the servants warming himself at the fire they had made in the open 'hall' (See on 58.).

71. "When he was gone out into the porch." Possibly with a view to escape after the alarm the first questioner had caused him. He is however at once beset by others, whom he silences for the time by his second and bolder lie, "I do not know the Man."

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69. The four accounts of the denials of St. Peter differ in various unimportant points. This may be accounted for by the probability that each time the question was raised there would be much confusion, many repeating the accusation, and himself using more words than are recorded. For instance, when he "began "to curse and to swear," it is not likely that he confined his denial to the few words given by St. Matthew.

The two chief difficulties are as follows: 1. St. Luke in the second denial makes the questioner a *man*, whereas St. Matthew and St. Mark speak of a *maid*. St. John simply says "*They*," and this may give a hint for explaining the apparent difference. Probably the maid first made the assertion (as the very words "This man also was with Jesus "of Nazareth" show) not to the Apostle, but to the by-standers, one of whom, a man, put the question to St. Peter. 2. In the third denial St. John gives a different account from the other three Evangelists, *they* making the accusation turn on his Galilæan speech, *he* on having been seen in the garden with Christ. But it is not difficult to unite the two, and to suppose that when the question was raised as to his speech, it drew attention to him, and caused the relation of Malchus to look at him, and recognize him as having been in the garden of Gethsemane when his relative was wounded.

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72 And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the Man.

73 And after a while came unto *him* they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art *one* of them; for thy speech bewrayeth thee.

74 Then began he to curse and to swear, *saying*, I know not the Man. And immediately the cock crew.

75 And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, [h] Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny Me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly.

h ver. 34. Mark 14. 30. John 13. 38.

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72. "With an oath." How fearful is the downward course of sin! And how many-sided is every act of sin! From a deceitful evasive answer, the Apostle goes on to denial with an oath, and then to cursing and swearing: while in his sin we see not only denial of his Lord, but cowardice, lying, ingratitude, faithlessness, blasphemy. How terrible to see this Saint, so high in position and privilege and profession, fallen so low!

73. "After a while." About an hour after, as we learn from St. Luke. xxii. 59.

"Thy speech bewrayeth thee." To 'bewray' means to betray. The Galilæans spoke a rougher and less polished dialect than that of Judæa, and this would catch the ear, just as the speech of a north-countryman would in the South of England, or of a South-countryman in the North.

74. "Then began he to curse and to swear." Few things are more remarkable in the Gospels than the entire openness with which the faults of the Apostles, and especially of St. Peter, are told (compare xvi. 23. xvii. 16. xx. 21. St. Luke ix. 54, 55.). This is the strongest proof of truthfulness.

"The cock crew." This was, as we learn from St. Mark, the *second* cock-crowing, that namely which takes place early in the morning (the first being in the night), and of which our Lord spoke (See on 33.). How often does God use the most simple and natural means to recall our erring steps, or to rouse the slumbering conscience!

75. "Peter remembered." It is astonishing that he should have all this while forgotten Christ's words. Yet wilful sin is very deaf and blind.

"He went out, and wept bitterly." St. Luke tells us that when the cock crew "the Lord turned and looked upon Peter." How must that look have pierced his guilty heart! Oh well for those whose falls bring with them instant sorrow, who wait not till the sin is almost forgotten, before they repent, but who, having fallen, go out, like the fallen Apostle, and weep bitterly.

A.D. 30.

CHAPTER XXVII.

1 *Christ is delivered bound to Pilate.* 3 *Judas hangeth himself.* 19 *Pilate, admonished of his wife,* 24 *washeth his hands:* 26 *and looseth Barabbas.* 29 *Christ is crowned with thorns,* 34 *crucified,* 40 *reviled,* 50 *dieth, and is buried:* 66 *His sepulchre is sealed, and watched.*

WHEN the morning was come, [a] all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put Him to death:

2 and when they had bound Him, they led *Him* away, and [b] delivered Him to Pontius Pilate the governor.

[a] Ps. 2. 2. Luke 23. 1. John 18. 28.

[b] ch. 20. 19. Acts 3. 13.

CHAPTER XXVII.

1, 2. Jesus sent to Pilate.

St. Mark xv. 1. St. Luke xxii. 66—71.

1. "When the morning was come." The events related in the latter part of the last chapter took place before daylight. This then is a *second* gathering of the great council, or Sanhedrin, who, after condemning Jesus as guilty of blasphemy, probably dispersed for a time, adjourning their meeting to a later hour of the morning. Indeed there was a Jewish law forbidding the trial of capital cases by night. Perhaps too they could obtain a fuller attendance at such later hour, and also they would be able then to communicate with the Roman governor, without whose sanction they could not condemn any prisoner to death (See on xxvi. 3.). The object of this second (or adjourned) assembly was to consult how best to accomplish the death of Christ. The heathen Roman governor, Pilate, would not be likely to care much for their charge of blasphemy against Him. He would be more likely to act like Gallio (Acts xviii. 12—16.) and refuse to listen to disputes about a religion he cared nothing about. So they must invent some other charge. This, as we shall see (11.), they did.

2. "Pontius Pilate the governor." The Roman governor of Judæa had his principal residence at Cæsarea on the sea-coast of Samaria, Samaria forming part of the Roman province of Judæa. During the great festivals he came to Jerusalem, residing in the Palace of Herod, probably that by his presence and his troops he might prevent any disturbance arising from the gathering together of so many Jews (See on xxvi. 5.).

Mark how the opening words of the 2nd Psalm were fulfilled in Christ, as is declared in the prayer of the Church in Jerusalem upon the release of St. Peter and St. John (Acts iv. 25—27.). The "heathen" and the "people," the "kings" and the "rulers," all were "gathered "together against the Lord, and against His Anointed." And these four are explained to signify Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentile Roman soldiers, and the people of Israel. Truly might He cry, in the words of the Psalm from which His last dying utterance was taken, "I became a reproof among all Mine enemies, but especially among "My neighbours, and they of Mine acquaintance were afraid of Me; "and they that did see Me without conveyed themselves from Me" (Ps. xxxi. 13. *Prayer-book Version.*).

A. D. 30.

3 ¶ [c]Then Judas, which had betrayed Him, when he saw that He was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders,

[c] ch. 26. 14, 15.

4 saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What *is that* to us? see thou *to that*.

5 And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, [d]and departed, and went and hanged himself.

[d] 2 Sam. 17. 23. Acts 1. 18.

6 And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood.

3—10. The end of Judas Iscariot.

3. "When he saw that He was condemned." We cannot tell whether Judas had expected that Jesus would be condemned, or whether he imagined that He might escape from the hands of His enemies. At any rate, when he saw the Jews bent on His death, and taking Him in bonds to Pilate in order to secure it, he was stricken with the horrors of remorse, and saw at last the real character of his frightful crime. Yet there was no repentance, for remorse is not repentance. One Apostle denied his Lord, and repented; the other betrayed Him, and destroyed himself in his bitter hatred of himself and of life. Thus does Satan let us grasp the cup which he makes us think so sweet, and then turns it to gall and wormwood. Judas now hates the money for which he had sold his Lord.

4. "I have sinned" &c. Judas confessed his crime, but not to God. It is true that, if we confess our sins, God will forgive and cleanse. But the confession must come from a penitent heart, or else it is not such confession as God will accept. Sins are sometimes confessed in vanity, sometimes in bravado, sometimes in mock humility, sometimes in remorse. But such confession has no promise.

"What is that to us?" That is, 'What is thy guilt to us?' Mark the utter wickedness, as well as the cruelty, of this answer. They care nothing for the remorse of Judas. But that is a small thing. Judas has confessed his Victim to be "innocent." But this too moves them not. They have gained their end, and neither the guilt of Judas, nor the innocence of Jesus, is anything to them.

5. "In the temple." Where he seems to have found those with whom he made his wicked bargain, or at least some in authority. He tries to get rid of a guilty conscience by getting rid of the fruits of his guilt. He flings from him what he finds brings, not pleasure, but misery. But it is in vain. Cut off from his former friends, scorned by his new ones, goaded by remorse and despair, he goes and hangs himself, in the very field (as appears from Acts i. 18, 19.) which was afterwards bought with the reward of his iniquity. How awful is the hint given us of the final state of Judas, when it is said that he went "to his own place" (Acts i. 25.)!

6. "It is not lawful" &c. Wonderful is the power of self-deception! These men shrink from putting into the treasury the price of blood,

7 And they took counsel, and bought with them A.D. 30.
the potter's field, to bury strangers in.

8 Wherefore that field was called, [e] The field of [e] Acts 1. 19.
blood, unto this day.

9 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, **And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of Him that was valued, [2] whom they of the children of Israel did value;**

[2] Or, *whom they bought of the children of Israel.*

10 **And gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me.** Zech. 11. 12, 13.

11 ¶ And Jesus stood before the governor: and the governor asked Him, saying, Art Thou the King of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, [f] Thou [f] 1 Tim. 6. 13.
sayest.

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while they shrink not from the bargain by which they have bought the shedding of that Blood itself! Is not this indeed to "strain at a "gnat, and swallow a camel" (xxiii. 24.)?

7 **"The potter's field."** So called probably from potter's clay having been worked there. There is still some of this white potter's clay remaining in the neighbourhood. Possibly the small price paid for the field (See on xxvi. 15.) may be accounted for by the clay having been worked out, and partly by the plot of ground being polluted by the horrible death of the traitor (See Acts i. 18.). The field lies to the South of Jerusalem (See Map.).

8. **"Wherefore that field" &c.** The reason for the name—"Field "of blood" ("Aceldama" Acts i. 19.)—was that the field was bought with the "price of blood," not that it was set apart "to bury strangers "in." In the Acts the reason for the name seems to be the dreadful death of Judas on the spot. If this event took place, as is probable, before the purchase of the field, the two reasons are closely joined together, for what name so fitting as "Field of blood," for the field which was polluted with the blood of Judas, and bought with the very money he received as the price of Another's Blood?

11—26. Jesus before Pilate.

St. Mark xv. 1—15. St. Luke xxiii. 1—5, 13—25. St. John xviii. 28—40.

11. **"Art Thou the King of the Jews?"** Those who led Jesus to Pilate brought against Him three accusations: 1. That He perverted

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9. *"Jeremy the prophet."* The words here quoted are from Zechariah, not from Jeremiah. We cannot tell how the error in the name arose. Different suggestions have been made; some supposing it to have been an error of some very early manuscript, from which the rest have been copied; others suggesting that a lost portion of Jeremiah's prophecies, from which (as was not unusual) Zechariah may have borrowed his words, may have existed in St. Matthew's time; others finding it easier, as it certainly is simpler, to believe that St. Matthew may have himself written Jeremiah, in quoting from memory, by mistake, the error being so utterly unimportant as not to need, if we may venture so to speak, the correction of the Divine inspiration (See on St. Mark ii. 26.).

A.D. 30.

12 And when He was accused of the chief priests and elders, [g] He answered nothing.

13 Then said Pilate unto Him, [h] Hearest Thou not how many things they witness against Thee?

14 And He answered him to never a word; insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly.

15 Now at *that* feast the governor was wont to

[g] ch. 26. 63. John 19. 9.
[h] ch. 26. 62. John 19. 10.

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the nation; 2. that He forbade to give tribute to Cæsar; and 3. that He said that He Himself was Christ a king. These charges they seem to have made outside the judgment-hall, into which they would not go. This question then was asked in consequence of these charges, and probably in public in the open space in front of the Roman 'prætorium,' or hall of justice. After this Pilate seems to have taken our Lord inside, and there to have privately examined Him. The course of these events is most fully and clearly given by St. John.

We may here observe that Pilate was not deceived by the charges brought against Jesus (See 18.). He must have heard and known much concerning Him before this time. Moreover he knew that the Jews had no such love for the Romans as to bring up a man to be tried for disloyalty to the Roman government. Probably he saw plainly enough that it was a religious question, and that the political charges were only an excuse. Still he was bound, as representing the Roman Emperor, to go into charges which directly concerned his sovereign's honour.

We may observe again that of the three charges brought the second only was a direct falsehood. The other two had a ground of truth. A lie is never so successful as when it has a mixture of truth with it.

"Thou sayest." That is, 'It is so.' Jesus calmly avows what He cannot truthfully deny. At present He makes no explanation. The clamour and impatience of His accusers prevent that. Yet Pilate knows that His words have some hidden meaning. He does not (like Caiaphas) break out at the confession, and cry, 'He hath spoken treason.' He waits to hear more.

14. "The governor marvelled greatly." Probably the silence of our Lord, which so impressed Pilate, was during the first outbreak of accusation in front of the court-house, when it would be of no avail to enter upon explanations. "When He was reviled, He reviled not again" (1 St. Peter ii. 23.).

We find from St. Luke that at an early stage of the proceedings, on hearing our Lord called a Galilæan, Pilate sent Him to Herod, who, though of the Jewish royal family, was under the power of the Roman government, having received from Rome his appointment as "tetrarch" of Galilee (See on St. Luke iii. 1.), and who was in Jerusalem at the time. This Pilate did partly to get rid of the case, and partly as an act of courtesy towards Herod, with whom he had had some quarrel. However Herod soon sent Jesus back to Pilate.

15. "Now at that feast" &c. Pilate thought, no doubt, that this was an excellent plan for setting Jesus free. It was the custom for the people at each Passover to choose some prisoner to be set free; and Pilate, seeing plainly that Jesus was not the dangerous character the Jews affirmed, but that they had delivered Him up "for envy," that is,

release unto the people a prisoner, whom they would. A.D. 30.

16 And they had then a notable prisoner, called Barabbas.

17 Therefore when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ?

18 For he knew that for envy they had delivered Him.

19 When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just Man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of Him.

20 [1]But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus. [1] Acts 3. 14.

21 The governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas.

22 Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? *They* all say unto him, Let Him be crucified.

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because He was too popular with the multitude, tried to induce them to select Him to be released.

16. "Barabbas." Nothing is known of this man beyond what we read in the Gospels. He was a robber and a murderer, and had probably been leader of one of the many bands of discontented Jews who rebelled against the Roman government. It is probable, from Pilate naming Barabbas with Jesus, that there had already been some talk about his being the prisoner to be selected for release at that Passover.

19. "His wife." It is probable that she had known something of Christ before, and at the least believed Him to be a holy and harmless man. There is no necessity to suppose her dream miraculous, but the message naming it should certainly have reminded Pilate of the claims of justice and mercy.

20. "The chief priests and elders." *They*, not the multitude, were our Lord's real enemies. The choice of the prisoner to be released was given to the *people*, and they were led by their rulers to choose Barabbas and refuse Christ. "Ye denied the Holy One and the Just," (says St. Peter) "and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; and killed the Prince "of life" (Acts iii. 14, 15.). Marvellous blindness! And yet was not this deliverance of Barabbas and death of Christ a picture of a great and glorious truth? For was not the "Holy One and the Just" delivered to death for the very reason that the unholy and the unjust may be set free and live?

22. "Let Him be crucified." No doubt Pilate was astounded at this

A. D. 30. 23 And the governor said, Why, what evil hath He done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let Him be crucified.

24 When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing,
k Deut. 21. 6. but *that* rather a tumult was made, he [k] took water, and washed *his* hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just Person: see ye *to it*.

l Deut. 19. 10. Josh. 2. 19. 2 Sam. 1. 16. 1 Kin. 2. 32. Acts 5. 28. 25 Then answered all the people, and said, [l] His blood *be* on us, and on our children.

m Isai. 53. 5. Luke 23. 16, 24, 25. 26 Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when [m] he had scourged Jesus, he delivered *Him* to be crucified.

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answer. He had expected the people to ask that Jesus should be set free; and now, led by their rulers, they clamour for His death. Crucifixion was the *Roman* punishment for sedition or treason. Stoning was the *Jewish* capital punishment.

23. "Why, what evil hath He done?" Having appealed in vain to their mercy, he now appeals to their justice. But equally in vain. They only cry out the more for His death. We find from St. John (xix. 12.) that the Jews threatened Pilate with the Emperor's displeasure if he let Jesus go. And here is the turning point of Pilate's own trial. Had he been a just ruler, he would have done justice to the Innocent at whatever risk to himself. But he was a weak and selfish man, and therefore he yielded to a pressure which he knew to be unjust.

24. "He took water," &c. Pilate might wash his hands, but he could not wash his soul from the guilt of an unjust and murderous judgment. As the chief priests and elders said to Judas, so he now says to them, "See ye to it." Yet guilt is not thus to be laid upon others at will, even though, like the people here, they may be ready to accept it.

25. "His blood be on us, and on our children." Thus do the Jews themselves accept the doom pronounced against them but a few days before by Christ (See xxiii. 35.). And verily that doom has been terribly fulfilled, both in the frightful sufferings of the siege of Jerusalem (See on xxiv. 21.), and also in the strange dispersion of the Jews ever since.

26. "When he had scourged Jesus." Scourging was customary before crucifixion, though from St. Luke (xxiii. 16.) we may gather that Pilate hoped that the scourging would satisfy the rage of the people, and that he might then let Jesus go. The scourges used by the Romans were whips with several lashes made of cord or leather, and loaded with pieces of metal or small bones. They mangled the flesh very fearfully, and scourging sometimes produced death. It was a punishment chiefly used for slaves. Can we think without deep emotion of our blessed Lord's sacred Body thus tortured and mangled? O Lord, we weep when we remember that it was our sins which dealt these fearful blows; and we adore Thee when we remember that by Thy "stripes we are healed" (Isai. liii. 5.).

27 ¶ Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the [2] common hall, and gathered unto Him the whole band *of soldiers*. A.D. 30.

[2] Or, *governor's house.*

28 And they stripped Him, and [n] put on Him a scarlet robe.

[n] Luke 23. 11.

29 [o] And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put *it* upon His head, and a reed in His right hand: and they bowed the knee before Him, and mocked Him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews!

[o] Ps. 69. 19. Isai. 53. 3.

30 And [p] they spit upon Him, and took the reed, and smote Him on the head.

[p] Isai. 50. 6. ch. 26. 67.

31 And after that they had mocked Him, they took the robe off from Him, and put His own

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27—31. Jesus mocked by the Roman soldiers.

St. Mark xv. 16—19. St. John xix. 1—3.

27. "Then the soldiers" &c. This was the third time on this one day of suffering that our Lord endured this awful insult and mockery. First it was at the *hands* of the Jews collected in the night after the first examination by the high priest (xxvi. 67, 68.), then by the soldiers of Herod (St. Luke xxiii. 11, 12.), and then by Pilate's soldiers, as narrated here.

28. "A scarlet robe." Very probably the same in which He had been sent back by Herod (St. Luke xxiii. 11.). St. Mark calls it "purple," but the same colour is meant. It was put on Jesus in mockery, and was meant to represent a royal dress.

29. "A crown of thorns." The robe, the crown, the sceptre, all are the mock emblems of royalty. How little did those mocking insolent soldiers know the truth of their pretended homage! For they are bowing before the King of kings. And never was crown so precious as this of thorns; and never was sceptre so mighty as this simple reed; and never throne so glorious as the Cross on which He was so soon to be lifted up.

30. "And they spit upon Him." Already His own countrymen, the Jews, had committed this horrible insult (xxvi. 67.); now the Gentile soldiers repeat the brutality. This is the lowest depth of humiliation; yet "as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He open-"eth not His mouth" (Isai. liii. 7.).

"Smote Him on the head." This would inflict fearful pain, the blows falling upon the crown of thorns. Now were fulfilled the prophet's words, "I gave My Back to the smiters, and My Cheeks to them "that plucked off the hair: I hid not My Face from shame and spitting" (Isai. l. 6.). Surely with the blood flowing down His patient Face, and the marks of the blows and the spitting upon Him, and His sacred Form mangled with the cruel scourge, the hardest heart might have been melted. Yet, when Pilate brought Him forth to the people, hoping to excite their compassion by the piteous sight, they only cried again their

A.D. 30. raiment on Him, [q] and led Him away to crucify
[q] Isai. 53. 7. *Him.*

[r] Num. 15. 35. 1 Kings 21. 13. Acts 7. 58. Heb. 13. 12. 32 ¶ [r] And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear His cross.

33 And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull,

[s] Ps. 69. 21. See ver. 48. 34 [s] they gave Him vinegar to drink mingled with

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savage cry, "Crucify Him, crucify Him" (St. John xix. 4—6.). As we gaze on this heart-rending scene, we cannot but recall the prophet's description, "His Visage was so marred more than any man, and His "Form more than the sons of men" (Isai. lii. 14.). St. John relates (xix. 9—15.), one more conversation which Pilate held with Him, before finally giving Him up to be crucified.

32—56. The Crucifixion.

St. Mark xv. 20—41. St. Luke xxiii. 26—49. St. John xix. 17—37.

32. "A man of Cyrene, Simon by name." Jesus "went forth" at first "bearing His cross" (St. John). This was a common practice for criminals. We, who (God be thanked!) have learned to love and glory in the Cross, can hardly understand the shame and degradation implied in the carrying of the cross. It would be looked upon in the same light as in this country would be a man's going to execution carrying his own gallows. Doubtless Jesus was too weak and exhausted to bear the weight long. And, since probably no one else was willing to help, they seize upon a poor African, who was passing by, and compel him to carry the cross. Cyrene is in the North of Africa, where the present Tripoli is situated. It was a Greek settlement, and many Jews lived there. Probably Simon was a Jew belonging to one of the families settled there. We should be sorry to refuse belief to the tradition that this man together with his two sons, Alexander and Rufus (St. Mark xv. 21.), became Christians. We can well conceive that in after years he would look back upon this, which at the time seemed a degrading office, as his highest glory and privilege. Yet there is a higher glory and privilege still. Doubtless he was blessed in being compelled to carry the cross after Jesus: but more blessed are they who, of their own choice and will, *take up* the Cross and follow Him.

33. "Golgotha." There is great doubt as to the site of Golgotha or Calvary (for the two words mean the same). We know that it was outside the walls, and it has been commonly supposed to be on the West side of the city. The reason for the name is also uncertain. It may be from its being the common place of execution (though we must not suppose that the skulls or other bones of the criminals were left unburied, which would not be allowed); or it may be that the place was a rounded hill in the shape of a human skull. There is no proof that Calvary was a hill, but it is generally supposed to have been so, and there is nothing improbable in such a notion.

34. "They gave Him vinegar to drink" &c. It was a frequent thing to give those about to suffer a stupefying drink of the sour wine

gall: and when He had tasted *thereof*, He would not drink. A.D. 30.

35 And they crucified Him, and parted His garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, **They parted My garments among them, and upon My vesture did they cast lots.** Psal. 22. 18.

36 † And sitting down they watched Him there; † ver. 54.

37 and set up over His head His accusation

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of the country (here called "vinegar") in which were steeped various herbs. This is probably what is here meant. But Jesus, perceiving on tasting it what it was, refused to drink it, because He would drink to the dregs the cup which His Father had given Him. He would not lighten His sufferings, nor lessen one agony by which we might be saved. St. Mark describes the drink as "wine mingled with "myrrh." Myrrh was no doubt used in the preparation, and is bitter to the taste. "Gall" is used for anything very bitter. The gall is strictly speaking an outgrowth upon certain plants produced by the eggs of a small fly. Oak-apples are in this country the commonest sort of gall. (See on 48. and St. Luke xxiii. 36.)

35. "They crucified Him." The shape of the Cross was probably that most familiar to us, in which the cross-piece is fastened a little way from the top. This is the shape shown in the most ancient pictures. The height however was probably not so great as it is customary to represent it. Ordinarily the feet were not raised far from the ground. The hands were fastened to the cross-piece by large nails, and frequently also by cords; the feet to the main upright beam, either together by one nail, or separately by two; the weight of the body being mainly supported by a piece of wood projecting between the legs. Death by crucifixion was very agonizing and very lingering.

Who can tell the hundredth part of all that is summed up in these three words, "They crucified Him"! The sin that needed it, the love that ordained it, the malice that wrought it, the patience that endured it,—all are past our utmost thoughts. We can but bow down and silently adore Him who, though God, yet "being found in fashion as "a man,..humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even "the death of the Cross" (Phil. ii. 8.).

"Parted His garments, casting lots." The clothes of persons executed belonged to the soldiers who had charge of the execution (See on St. John xix. 23, 24.).

37. "And set up" &c. This was done by Pilate's orders (See St. John) before the parting of the garments, and probably at the time when our Lord was nailed to the cross.

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35. Probably the most ancient representation of the Crucifixion in existence is that discovered in the underground church of St. Clement in Rome. It is painted on the wall, and probably belongs to the eighth century after Christ. In this ancient picture the cross is of the ordinary shape, but with a small board across the very top for the inscription. It is however very low, raising our Lord only so far from the ground that the arms of the cross are slightly above the heads of the bystanders. The feet are not nailed together, but separately.

A.D. 30. written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

u Isai. 53. 12. 38 u Then were there two thieves crucified with Him, one on the right hand, and another on the left.

x Ps. 22. 7. & 109. 25. 39 And x they that passed by reviled Him, wagging their heads,

y ch. 26. 61. John 2. 19. ch. 26. 63. 40 and saying, y Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest *it* in three days, save Thyself. z If Thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross.

41 Likewise also the chief priests mocking *Him*, with the scribes and elders, said,

42 He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He be the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him.

a Ps. 22. 8. 43 a He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now,

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"THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS." The four Evangelists vary slightly in the actual words of the inscription on the Cross; but the variation makes no difference in the sense. The title, or inscription, was given in three languages, Hebrew (for the Jews, See *Note* on St. John i. 42.), Greek (for the educated strangers at Jerusalem), and Latin (for the Roman soldiers). Thus is a pledge given even on the Cross itself that the Gospel shall be preached to all nations.

38. "Two thieves." We can hardly doubt that our Lord's being placed between the two thieves was intended as a still deeper disgrace and humiliation. He that a little while ago was seen in glory between two saints is now hanging in shame between two thieves! Yet hereby was prophecy fulfilled, and a sinner saved. Jesus was "numbered with the transgressors," and "made His grave with the wicked" (Isai. liii. 9, 12.). The "thieves" may have belonged to the same band as Barabbas. They had doubtless, like him, been guilty of violence, and perhaps murder, as well as robbery. May not these two thieves remind us of the great parting of all mankind on the right hand and on the left hand in the Judgment? On one side is penitence, on the other impenitence. What else will part us then?

40. "Thou that destroyest the temple," &c. Plainly this saying was one which had laid hold of the people, being, of course, misunderstood by them. Probably the use made of it in the trial (See xxvi. 61.) had already made it more notorious.

42. "He saved others." Spoken, of course, in mockery, and meaning, 'He *pretended* to save others.' If our Lord had been the vilest impostor, this mockery in the midst of the agonies of a fearful death would have been most brutal. But that educated men, like the chief priests and scribes and elders, could thus insult One so meek and patient and uncomplaining, is almost past belief. It was truly Satanic.

43. "Let Him deliver Him." Are not they that trust in God

if He will have Him: for He said, I am the Son of God. A.D. 30.

44 The thieves also, which were crucified with Him, cast the same in His teeth.

45 [b] Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. [b] Amos 8. 9.

46 And about the ninth hour [c] Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, **Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?** that is to say, **My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?** [c] Heb. 5. 7. Psal. 22. 1.

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always delivered? Surely yes: but God's truest deliverance is not the ceasing of temporal suffering and trial, but the triumph of grace in the midst of them.

44. "The thieves." The repentance and pardon of one of these is related only by St. Luke (xxiii. 39—43.).

45. "From the sixth hour." That is, from twelve o'clock, or noon, the Jews reckoning the hours from six in the morning. Our Lord had already been upon the Cross for some time before this miraculous darkness began. When we remember *Who* it was that was dying during those awful hours, we cannot marvel at any disturbances of nature which took place. Rather we should marvel if that world which was made by Him gave no sign or witness of the stupendous event of which it was the scene. There appears to have been a solemn silence and awe reigning over the scene during the three hours of darkness, during which time our Lord Himself uttered no sound.

46. "My God, My God," &c. This terrible cry reveals the depth of human anguish suffered by Him, whom "in all things it behoved "to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and "faithful High-priest" (Heb. ii. 17.). We cannot doubt that, in accepting the perfect experience of all human suffering, our Lord underwent that most fearful form of suffering—the sense of being forsaken by God. Many godly persons are called to taste this cup of anguish. Asaph, in the 77th Psalm, gives expression to the frequent complaint, when he says, "Will the Lord absent Himself for ever? and will He be no "more intreated? Is His mercy clean gone for ever? and is His "promise come utterly to an end for evermore? Hath God forgotten "to be gracious? and will He shut up His loving-kindness in dis-"pleasure?" (Ps. lxxvii. 7—9.). When we are bowed down by such sadness of soul, and light and hope seem gone, is it not a most comforting thing to know that it is our "own infirmity", and that Christ Himself has borne the same sense of desolation, and so can be "touched with "the feeling of our infirmities" (Heb. iv. 15.)? It has been rightly observed that, even in uttering this cry of desolation, Jesus does not let go *all* trust in God, for He says, "*My* God." Thus let us learn to say, "What time I am afraid, I will trust in Thee" (Ps. lvi. 3.).

It is important to notice that our Lord's bitter cry is a quotation from the Book of Psalms. So is His last utterance on the Cross,

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45. "*The sixth hour.*" For an explanation of the seeming differences between the Evangelists as to the hour, see on St. Mark xv. 25. and St. John xix. 14.

A.D. 30. 47 Some of them that stood there, when they heard *that,* said, This *Man* calleth for Elias.

48 And straightway one of them ran, and took
[d] Ps. 69. 21. a spunge, [d] and filled *it* with vinegar, and put *it* on a reed, and gave Him to drink.

49 The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save Him.

"Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit." That our Lord in such an hour should have made use of these sentences to express that which words might be thought all but powerless to express surely gives a Divine approval to the Book of Psalms as a Hand-book of Christian devotion.

Of the seven sayings on the Cross one only (the present one) is related by St. Matthew and St. Mark, three are given by St. Luke, and three by St. John. The sayings are as follows:—

1. "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (St. Luke).
2. "To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise" (St. Luke).
3. "Woman, behold thy son"—"Behold thy mother" (St. John).
4. "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" (St. Matthew and St. Mark).
5. "I thirst" (St. John).
6. "It is finished" (St. John).
7. "Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit" (St. Luke).

47. "This Man calleth for Elias." The word "Eli" might be mistaken for 'Elias', and probably this saying of our Lord is retained in the original Hebrew to account for the mistake. But whether the mistake was wilful or not is doubtful. Some think the Jewish bystanders were awed by the darkness, and, catching the sound of our Lord's words, really thought He was calling for Elias, whose return to life they constantly expected (See on xvii. 10.). But it is more in accordance with verse 49 to suppose the words to be said in mockery, the "Eli" being wilfully misunderstood.

48. "Straightway." There can be little doubt that the cry "I thirst," though not related by St. Matthew, was the cause of the act of mercy named in this verse (Compare St. John xix. 28—30.). It is also plain that this cry must have followed *directly after* that which gave rise to the mention of Elias. We must be careful to distinguish between this giving of vinegar, and that named in verse 34. This time Christ does not refuse the draught, for it does not seem to have been mixed with any stupefying drug, and also the end was come and all had been now endured. Let us trust that the compassion which led this man to assuage the dying thirst of our Lord may have led him afterwards to know and love Him whose love "passeth knowledge."

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49. "*The rest said.*" St. Mark represents the man who gave the wine to Jesus as saying the words here given. Probably both the giver of the wine and the rest had the same thought, and uttered the same taunt, though the one man was sufficiently moved with pity to afford relief to Christ's thirst. The "Let be" (in St. Matthew), and "Let alone" (in St. Mark), were not addressed either by the rest to the one man offering the wine, or by him to the rest, as though they were preventing him; but were only exclamations, such as 'Wait' might be in more modern English. It is almost as if it were, '*Let us wait* and see whether Elias will come.'

50 Jesus, when He had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. A.D. 30.

51 And, behold, [e] the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; [e] Ex. 26. 31. 2 Chron. 3. 14. Mark 15. 38. Luke 23. 45.

52 and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose,

53 and came out of the graves after His resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.

54 [f] Now when the centurion, and they that were [f] ver. 36. Mark 15. 39. Luke 23. 47.

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50. "**When He had cried again.**" This may have been a mere cry of anguish without words, or it may have been the utterance of the last words as given by St. Luke, "Father, into Thy hands I commend My "Spirit." The latter is more probable: and in that case each Evangelist explains the *cry* mentioned by the other (See on St. Luke xxiii. 46.).

"**Yielded up the ghost.**" "Ghost" is the same as 'Spirit,' and this expression means 'gave up His Spirit to God.' Oh awful moment—the most awful the world has ever known! The Son of God is dying for man! His human Spirit passes into Paradise (See on St. Luke xxiii. 43.); His Body hangs dead upon the Cross, awaiting burial. Yet still is He God. He is God in death, as He is God in life. The Divine and Human Natures, once joined together in the Incarnation, were never more to be divided. "God and Man is one Christ" (*Athan. Creed.*). "By Thy Cross and Passion; by Thy precious Death and Burial; "Good Lord, deliver us" (*Litany.*).

51. "**The veil of the temple was rent in twain.**" This veil separated the 'Holy of holies,' which was a type of heaven, from the rest of the temple. None but the high-priest might pass that curtain, and he only once in the year. Its being rent in two was a sign that now we might have "boldness to enter into the holiest by the Blood "of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, "through the veil, that is to say, His flesh" (Heb. x. 19, 20.). "When "Thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, Thou didst open the "kingdom of heaven to all believers" (*Te Deum.*).

52. "**The graves were opened.**" By the earthquake at the time of our Lord's death, thus showing that by His death He had conquered death.

53. "**After His resurrection.**" Though the graves were opened at our Lord's death, yet the bodies of the saints did not arise till His Resurrection, thus witnessing to the truth that He is "the Resurrection "and the Life" (St. John xi. 25.). How long these "saints" were permitted to remain upon earth we cannot tell, nor in what manner they left it; whether, that is, they had again to pass through the gate of death, or whether they were taken to heaven without again suffering death (See *Note* on xvii. 3.).

54. "**The centurion,**" &c. The signs and wonders, following upon the mysterious darkness, shake even the heathen Roman guard. The officer and his four men (See on St. John xix. 23.) are terror-stricken, and confess (though we know not how far they understood the full

A.D. 30. with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God.

55 And many women were there beholding afar
g Luke 8. 2, 3. off, [g] which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto Him:

h Mark 15. 40. 56 [h] among which was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's children.

57 ¶ When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathæa, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple:

58 he went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered.

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meaning of the words they spoke) that Jesus is "the Son of God." It surely is not improbable that this first conviction of fear may have ripened afterwards into true faith and love. At any rate God brought these men very near to the kingdom of God.

55. "Afar off." These holy women, or at least some of them, had at one time been nearer to the Cross (St. John xix. 25.). It is thought that the blessed mother of our Lord retired with St. John, after Jesus had commended them to each other as mother and son; and, if so, the other women may have also retired, and watched the rest of the time at a distance.

56. "Mary the mother of James and Joses." She was wife of Alphæus or Cleopas (See on xiii. 55. St. John xix. 25.). This James is called "James the less" by St. Mark (xv. 40.).

"The mother of Zebedee's children." St. Mark gives her name—"Salome."

57—61. The Burial.

St. Mark xv. 42—47. St. Luke xxiii. 50—56. St. John xix. 38—42.

57. "When the even was come." This was before sunset, the *first* evening (See on xiv. 23.), for the Sabbath would begin at sunset (See on St. John xix. 31.), and it would be necessary, in obedience to the Jewish law, to complete the burial before that time.

"Arimathæa." It is not known for certain what place this is, though it is probably the same as Ramathaim, the birthplace of Samuel (1 Sam. i. 1.).

"Joseph." We find from St. Mark that Joseph was "an honourable "councillor," that is, a member of the Jewish high council, or Sanhedrin (See on xxvi. 3.), and from St. Luke that he had not joined in the condemnation of Jesus. St. John alone names Nicodemus as assisting in the pious work.

58. "Begged the body of Jesus." The Jews were very particular about the burial of the dead, which would prevent this pious act of Joseph appearing very marked in the eyes of his fellow-countrymen,

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56. "*Mary Magdalene.*" See on St. Luke viii. 2.

59 And when Joseph had taken the body, he A.D. 30.
wrapped it in a clean linen cloth,
60 and [i] laid it in his own new tomb, which he [i] Isai. 53. 9.
had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great
stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.
61 And there was Mary Magdalene, and the other
Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre.

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and so bringing down upon him their anger as a disciple of Jesus. Pilate, who was so unwilling to allow Jesus to be condemned, would gladly permit any respect to be shown to His Body after death. He took care however, as St. Mark tells us, to find out that He was really dead, before giving the permission.

60. "His own new tomb." This was in a garden close at hand, and Joseph seems to have gladly allowed the sacred Body of our Lord to be placed there, there being but little time to spare before the beginning of the Sabbath. The tomb was hewn in the rock, and was cut, like a cave, into the side of the rock. Many such tombs, now empty, are to be seen in the Holy Land, and they often afford shelter to outcasts and robbers.

Now that we have seen Jesus laid in the tomb, we must remind ourselves of the spiritual lesson drawn for us in holy Scripture from our Lord's Death and Burial. St. Paul says that "We are buried with "Him *by Baptism* into death" (Rom. vi. 4. and Col. ii. 12.), by which he would teach us that the passing under the water of Baptism is meant to figure and represent a death and burial, wherein our old nature and former sins are by profession, and should be in very deed, dead and buried, and wherefrom we must rise to a new life (See on xxviii. 6.).

61. "The other Mary." The wife of Cleopas (See on 56.). These women, after seeing the spot, went back to the city, and (probably with others) prepared spices for the embalment of the Body, which they intended to perform as soon as the Sabbath was over. Nicodemus had brought a large quantity of myrrh and aloes (St. John), which was wrapped in the linen cloth with the Body, but this was obliged to be done hastily, and perhaps very imperfectly.

Thus is Jesus laid in the tomb to rest for the great Sabbath, and to fulfil the law by that Sabbath rest. Henceforth the Sabbath is to wane before the brightness of the Lord's Day. The Christian's hope is not rest but Resurrection. Yet it is only Christ's Body, which rests in the grave. The Spirit is on its mission of mercy to the Spirits of the dead (See on 1 St. Peter iii. 19.), and there it meets the spirit of the penitent thief, in Paradise. For Paradise is not heaven, but is the Jewish name for the place where the spirits of the just await their Resurrection (See on St. Luke xxiii. 43.). So too when St. Peter applies to our Lord the words of David, "Thou shalt not leave My "soul in hell" (Acts ii. 27.), and when in our Creed we say "He "descended into hell," we understand by "hell" the abode of departed spirits. For the word translated "hell" in these places is quite a different word from that used for hell-fire. The word for the place of departed spirits is 'Hades,' that for hell-fire 'Gehenna.' Unfortunately in English we use the same word for both (See on St. Luke xvi. 23.).

A.D. 30. 62 ¶ Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate,

63 saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while He was yet alive, [k] After three days I will rise again.

[k] ch. 16. 21. & 17. 23. & 20. 19. & 26. 61. Mark 8. 31. & 10. 34. Luke 9. 22. & 18. 33. & 24. 6, 7. John 2. 19.

64 Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest His disciples come by night, and steal Him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first.

65 Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make *it* as sure as ye can.

66 So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, [l] sealing the stone, and setting a watch.

[l] Dan. 6. 17.

62—66. The sealing of the Tomb.

62. "The next day." This was the great Sabbath of the Passover, and therefore a day of special sacredness. Yet the "chief priests and "Pharisees," always so ready to find fault with Jesus for any act which He did on the Sabbath-day, are now busy with their plans to make (as they foolishly think) their work secure.

63. "We remember." Though even the Apostles themselves did not understand the true meaning of the saying, for "it was hid from "them," yet no doubt it was much spoken of, and had come to the ears of the chief priests, who now began to apply it, and to fear lest the disciples should try by fraud to make the people believe it to be fulfilled. Our Lord's comparison of Himself with the prophet Jonah would probably be remembered (See xii. 40.), and possibly there was some suspicion of the true meaning of the saying concerning the temple brought against Him before Caiaphas (See St. John ii. 19.).

64. "The last error" &c. The "last error" would be the allowing the people to believe that Christ was risen; the "first" their believing in Him at all.

65. "Ye have a watch." Many would translate these words (as they may correctly be translated), '*Take ye* a watch,' that is, a guard of Roman soldiers, Pilate placing such a guard at their disposal. This seems better, for, had the Jews already possessed a guard of soldiers, they need not have come to the governor for the purpose. Otherwise, we may perhaps suppose that certain soldiers were set during the feast as a guard over the temple, perhaps to some extent at the disposal of the chief priests for the purpose of keeping order, and that Pilate may have bidden them to make use of these.

66. "Sealing the stone." Not to prevent any one breaking in, but (just as we seal a letter) to ensure discovery if any one were to break in.

See how by their care and precautions these enemies of Christ are preparing only surer proofs of His Resurrection. Thus were they taken in the crafty wiliness that they had imagined.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

A.D. 30.

1 Christ's resurrection is declared by an angel to the women. 9 He Himself appeareth unto them. 11 The high priests give the soldiers money to say that He was stolen out of His sepulchre. 16 Christ appeareth to His disciples, 19 and sendeth them to baptize and teach all nations.

IN the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first *day* of the week, came Mary Magdalene [a] and the other Mary to see the sepul- [a] ch. 27. 56.
chre.

2 And, behold, there [2]was a great earthquake: [2] Or, *had been.*

CHAPTER XXVIII.

1—8. The Resurrection.

St. Mark xvi. 1—8. St. Luke xxiv. 1—12. St. John xx. 1—10.

1. **"The first day of the week."** Thus does the "Light of the "world" burst forth from the darkness of the tomb on the day on which God said, "Let there be light." Henceforth this day is the Christian's holy day,—the "Lord's-day" (See on xxvii. 61.). It is, by Jewish reckoning, the third day from the day of the Crucifixion, and the type of Jonah's deliverance from the deep is accomplished. Some think it was on this day too, that the priest waved the sheaf of the first-fruits before the Lord (See *Note*.). When the first-fruits were offered the rest of the harvest was hallowed. So in the great world's harvest the first-fruits are gathered in—"Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that "are Christ's at His coming" (1 Cor. xv. 23.).

"Mary Magdalene and the other Mary." Who had watched the burial (xxvii. 61.). St. Mark adds to these two Salome, and St. Luke Joanna. St. John mentions Mary Magdalene only. Doubtless they all (and other women also with them (St. Luke) met at the sepulchre.

"To see the sepulchre." But some, at least, among them also for the purpose of anointing our Lord's Body (St. Mark and St. Luke).

2. **"And, behold,"** &c. This and the next two verses do not belong to the continuous history of the visit of the women, but are brought in to relate what had happened *before their arrival*, possibly while they were on the way; some think even while they were within sight, though at a distance. As they came they wondered who would remove the stone

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1. "*In the end of the sabbath.*" This would, according to ordinary Jewish usage, represent the evening of the sabbath after sunset. But here St. Matthew speaks rather according to the natural divisions of day and night, or as we should do.

"*The first day of the week.*" It is said above that some have thought this was the day of the offering of the first-fruits. This depends upon the interpretation of Lev. xxiii. 11., where it is said that the sheaf was to be waved before the Lord "on the morrow after the sabbath" of the Passover. The "sabbath" in this verse is generally explained to be not the weekly sabbath, but the first day of unleavened bread, in which there was an "holy convocation," and which was kept as a sabbath. This use of the word is certainly suggested by other parts of the same chapter (See verse 39.). But the day *may* be understood to be the day after the *weekly* sabbath which fell in the Passover week, in which case it would be the day of our Lord's Resurrection. It may be well to observe that the sheaf of the first-fruits was a sheaf of unripe barley, and that a second offering of first-fruits took place fifty days later at Pentecost, when the first *bread* of the new harvest was offered.

A.D. 30. for [b] the angel of the Lord descended from heaven,
[b] John 20. 12. and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.

[c] Dan. 10. 6. 3 [c] His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow:

4 and for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead *men*.

5 And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.

[d] ch. 12. 40. & 16. 21. & 17. 23. & 20. 19. 6 He is not here: for He is risen, [d] as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

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from the mouth of the tomb, plainly not being aware of the Roman guard having been placed there. These verses account for their finding the stone already rolled away.

It is doubtful whether these three verses describe what took place at the very time of the Resurrection, or not. The ancient opinion was that Christ rose and left the tomb *before*, as He entered a room with closed doors later in the day (St. John xx. 19.), and that the earthquake and descent of the Angel were to open the tomb and show that He was gone. Certainly St. Matthew does not seem to speak as though the rolling away of the stone were in order that Christ might leave the tomb. It was at the awful and glorious appearance of the Angel and at his act of power, not at the sight of the rising Lord, that the "keepers," that is, the Roman guard, "did shake, and became as dead men."

5. "The angel answered." The word "answered" does not of necessity imply that the women spoke to him. He most likely answered their looks of wonder and of awe. This appears to be the same Angel who had rolled away the stone, but from St. Mark's more minute account we find that he was not now sitting on the stone, but had entered the sepulchre. St. Luke says there were *two* Angels, but doubtless only one of them spoke, and the first two Evangelists accordingly only mention him (See on the *two* demoniacs in viii. 28.).

"Fear not ye." "Fear not" is the common salutation of Angels. Here we find from the Greek that there is a force to be laid upon the word "ye." The Roman guards had been stricken down with terror, but these lowly loving women need not fear. The Angel had no terrors for *them*.

6. "He is risen." Oh glorious news, proclaimed, like the Christmas "good tidings of great joy," by an Angel's lips! Now is the second birthday of the Lord, for it is of His Easter Birth from the tomb that it is written, "Thou art My Son: this day have I begotten Thee" (Ps. ii. 7. Observe that Ps. ii. is one of those appointed by the Church for Easter Day.). Now too is the work of our Redemption perfected, for, "If Christ "be not raised, your faith is vain: ye are yet in your sins" (1 Cor. xv. 17.). Easter has always been the greatest Christian festival. It is a season of peculiar joy and triumph, and they who keep duly the penitential weeks of Lent will be best fitted to enter into the joy of Easter. It may be well to name that our Church requires all her members to communicate at Easter, and surely none can think the season fitly observed

7 And go quickly, and tell His disciples that A.D. 30.
He is risen from the dead; and, behold, [e] He goeth [e] ch. 26. 32.
before you into Galilee; there shall ye see Him:
lo, I have told you.

8 And they departed quickly from the sepulchre
with fear and great joy; and did run to bring
His disciples word.

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without this blessed Eucharistic service; though they do best who make "an Easter-day in every week."

We must not pass by the history of the Resurrection without mention of its spiritual lesson for us. As we have seen how the Burial of our Lord is used by St. Paul to remind us of our death and burial unto sin in Baptism (See on xxvii. 60.), so too is His Resurrection used in the same passages to remind us of our new birth unto righteousness. When we are baptized we have a mystical share in His Resurrection, being, in profession, raised with Christ, and bound in very deed to rise with Him, unto newness of life. Mark too the Apostle's still farther lesson, "If "ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above" (Col. iii. 1.).

"Where the Lord lay." This is the only time that St. Matthew uses the title "the Lord." The Angel invites the women to look into the tomb that they may be perfectly sure that the Lord is no longer there.

7. **"He goeth before you into Galilee."** This is a repetition of our Lord's own words (See on xxvi. 32.). The words, "There shall ye see "Him," are part of the message the women were to take to the disciples. Though He was to appear several times, and to various persons, on this very day, yet it was in Galilee that the great meeting with His assembled disciples was to take place, and this event is probably referred to by St. Paul, when he speaks of our Lord being seen after His Resurrection by "above five hundred brethren at once" (1 Cor. xv. 6.).

8. **"With fear and great joy."** How well we can understand this mingled feeling. The miracles and wonders make them fear, even though the Angel has said, "Fear not." There must be some fear in meeting face to face with the unseen world. Yet the "great" belongs to the "joy" not to the "fear." For they have much of that love, which, when "perfect," "casteth out fear." Perhaps indeed the "fear" of this verse is more *awe* than ordinary fear. St. Mark tells us that, under the influence of this feeling, they spoke to no one as they went.

9, 10. The appearance to the women.

Five appearances of our Lord on the day of His Resurrection are recorded by the Evangelists. They are as follows:—

1. To Mary Magdalene (St. Mark xvi. 9. St. John xx. 1—18.).
2. To other women (St. Matt. xxviii. 9, 10.).
3. To St. Peter (St. Luke xxiv. 34. Also 1 Cor. xv. 5.).
4. To the two disciples going to Emmaus (St. Mark xvi. 12. St. Luke xxiv. 13—32.).
5. To the Apostles and others assembled together, but without St. Thomas (St. Luke xxiv. 36—43. St. John xx. 19—23, and perhaps St. Mark xvi. 14.).

A.D. 30. 9 ¶ And as they went to tell His disciples, behold,
f See Mark 16. 9. John 20. 14. f Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held Him by the feet, and worshipped Him.

10 Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid:
g See John 20. 17. Rom. 8. 29. Heb. 2. 11. go tell g My brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see Me.

It is extremely difficult to make a connected history of the Resurrection day out of the above scattered fragments. If we could know all the events of the day, we should doubtless see the truthfulness of each of the short accounts, and be able to fit it into its right place.

In order to understand rightly this second appearance (which is the only one recorded by St. Matthew) we must very briefly sketch what seems to be the course of events up to this time. The women start to visit the sepulchre very early in the morning. Mary Magdalene probably is the first to reach it, and seeing the stone rolled away, she runs (St. John xx. 2.) at once into the city to tell St. Peter and St. John, who immediately run to see for themselves. Meanwhile the other women collect at the sepulchre, and receive the tidings of the Resurrection from Angels who appear to them, and then depart. St. John first, and then St. Peter, soon reach the spot, and see the empty tomb (though no Angels), and depart. Mary Magdalene follows them back, and lingers at the tomb in grief, seeing first the Angels, and then Jesus Himself. This is His first appearance. Immediately after this He appears to the other women, as related in the passage before us.

9. "As they went." The distance from the sepulchre to the city was short, so that we must suppose these women had scarcely left the spot when Mary Magdalene returned, so that our Lord might appear to her and converse with her, as related by St. John, and yet appear afterwards to the other women before they reached the city. We must remember our Lord's Body was no longer subject to the same laws of nature as before His death. He now appeared and disappeared at will, nor need there have been any interval between His disappearing from Mary Magdalene and appearing to the women on their way.

"Held Him by the feet, and worshipped Him." Falling down and embracing the feet was an act of reverent homage and devotion. At the same time the women were doubtless awe-stricken at the presence of One whom they had seen crucified, dead, and buried; and therefore Jesus says, "Be not afraid." It is very remarkable that our Lord appears to have allowed in these women the very touch which He had immediately before forbidden to Mary Magdalene. Possibly there was in these a more reverent spirit and a less impulsive and eager action (See on St. John xx. 17.).

10. "Be not afraid: go tell My brethren." The Angel had bidden them not to fear before. Now the same comforting command comes from lips yet more sacred. He, their risen Lord, would take away all the "fear" and leave only the "great joy." What love too was in the word "brethren." It was the same to Mary Magdalene. She first, and now these others, are taught that their glorified Lord is not changed in His love to His disciples, for "He is not ashamed to call them 'brethren'" (Heb. ii. 11.); and this too when all had forsaken, and one of them denied Him (See on St. Mark xvi. 7.).

11 ¶ Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all the things that were done. A.D. 30.

12 And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers,

13 saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole Him *away* while we slept.

14 And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you.

15 So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.

11—15. The bribing of the Roman guard.

11. "Some of the watch." There were other messengers besides the faithful women going to spread the news of the Resurrection. The Roman soldiers went to their employers (See on xxvii. 65.) and reported honestly what had occurred. But malice and unbelief like those of the chief priests were not to be shaken even by the unwilling testimony of men who could have no motive for lying. So determined are they to crush out all belief in Christ that they bribe the guard with a large sum of money to tell a lie, and assert the very thing which they were stationed at the tomb to prevent.

14. "If this come to the governor's ears." Discipline in the Roman army was exceedingly strict (See Acts xii. 19. xvi. 27.), and a sentinel sleeping on his post would be put to death. Thus the guard would be very unwilling to say what they were bribed to say, lest it should bring them into trouble. So the assembled council promise the soldiers that, should the matter come to Pilate's ears, they would "persuade "him," probably with a bribe of money to overlook the matter.

16—20. The meeting on the mountain of Galilee.

There are four great scenes recorded in which our Lord was present after the Resurrection-day.

These four great scenes are as follows:—

1. When the eleven were assembled, a week after the Resurrection, St. Thomas being with them (St. John).
2. The assembly on the mountain in Galilee (St. Matthew).
3. The occurrences on the Sea of Galilee (St. John).
4. The final gathering in Jerusalem with the Ascension (St. Mark, and St. Luke—Gospel and Acts).

The same remark which was made upon the appearances on the day of the Resurrection (See on 9, 10.) applies again to those of the great forty days. It is all but impossible to draw out a clear and connected history of them. In St. Mark and St. Luke portions of different conversations seem to be gathered together; and these are

A. D. 30.

16 ¶ Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain [h] where Jesus had appointed them.

17 And when they saw Him, they worshipped Him: but some doubted.

18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, [i] All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth.

[h] ver. 7. ch. 26. 32.
[i] Dan. 7. 13, 14. ch. 11. 27. & 16. 28. Luke 1. 32. & 10. 22. John 3. 35. & 5. 22. & 13. 3. & 17. 2. Acts 2. 36. Rom. 14. 9. 1 Cor. 15. 27. Eph. 1. 10, 21. Phil. 2. 9, 10. Heb. 1. 2. & 2. 8. 1 Pet. 3. 22. Rev. 17. 14.

given so briefly that we cannot tell to which occasions we are to refer the various sayings. This need not trouble any one, for so long as we know that the words were spoken by our risen Lord, it matters not whether they were spoken in Galilee or at Jerusalem, on one occasion or on many. Since however many desire to see how the various accounts may be harmonized, or fitted into one another, it may be well to give the following outline, which is taken from Greswell's Harmony of the Gospels, and is perhaps as satisfactory as any.

1. Our Lord appears to the Eleven a week after the Resurrection (St. John xx. 26—29., and perhaps St. Mark xvi. 14.).

2. He appears to the assembled disciples on a mountain in Galilee (St. Matt. xxviii. 16—20. and 1 Cor. xv. 6.).

3. He appears on the Sea of Galilee, where the second miraculous draught of fishes, and the great conversation with St. Peter, occur (St. John xxi.).

4. He appears to St. James, probably "the Lord's brother." Of this appearance we know nothing (1 Cor. xv. 7.).

5. He meets the Apostles at Jerusalem just before the Ascension (St. Luke xxiv. 36—49. Acts i. 4—8. 1 Cor. xv. 7.).

6. He ascends in presence of the Apostles from the Mount of Olives (St. Mark xvi. 15—19. St. Luke xxiv. 50—53. Acts i. 9—12.).

16. "Then the eleven disciples." As St. Matthew relates only one appearance of our Lord on the day of the Resurrection, so he relates only this one appearance during the great forty days. Our Lord had plainly pointed out the exact place of meeting on some previous occasion.

17. "When they saw Him," &c. There can be little doubt that others besides "the eleven" were present. Indeed in all probability this occasion is that on which Christ appeared to "above five hundred "brethren at once" (1 Cor. xv. 6.). We must not fail to notice the *worship* here paid to the Saviour. He is to be honoured by us even as the Father is honoured (See on St. John v. 23.), and to Him, as "equal "to the Father as touching His Godhead", is all worship due. Those who "doubted" were probably not of the Apostles, and we may suppose this doubting to have been only on the first appearance of our Lord at a little distance on the mountain, and to have been dispelled when He "came and spake unto them" (18.).

18. "All power is given unto Me" &c. Christ is now King indeed, but not "King of the Jews" only, for He is King over all the world. Thus did Daniel prophesy, "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, "one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to "the Ancient of days, and they brought Him near before Him. And

19 [k] Go ye therefore, and [1 2] teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: A.D. 30.

k Mark 16. 15.
1 Isai. 52. 10. Luke 24. 47.
Acts 2. 38, 39. Rom. 10. 18. Col. 1. 23. 2 Or, *make disciples*, or, *Christians of all nations.*

"there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all "people, nations, and languages, should serve Him: His dominion is "an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom "that which shall not be destroyed" (Dan. vii. 13, 14.). God hath "raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the "heavenly places, . . and hath put all things under His feet, and gave "Him to be the head over all things to the Church, which is His body" (Eph. i. 20, 22, 23.). "God also hath highly exalted Him, and given "Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus "every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and "things under the earth" (Phil. ii. 9, 10.). And "He must reign, till "He hath put all enemies under His feet." Then, "when all things "shall be subdued unto Him," He shall resign the kingdom over which as Mediator He reigns. His special work and office towards man will be ended. And God—God in Three Persons, Father Son and Holy Ghost—"of one substance, majesty, and glory" (Art. V.)—"God shall "be all in all" (1 Cor. xv. 24—28.).

19. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations." Literally, 'Make 'disciples of all nations.' The time was come when the ancient promise to Abraham should be fulfilled, that in his Seed "all the families of "the earth should be blessed." The "kingdom of heaven" (See on iii. 2.) is now fully established; and the servants are sent forth to gather all men into that kingdom. Here is the great missionary command to the Church, repeated, it seems, in other words, as the last command of the King, ere His bodily presence was withdrawn from His earthly kingdom (See St. Mark xvi. 15.). How mighty in force, how binding in obligation, must be such a command at such a time! Let us only pause to note this:—that the Lord lays upon man the carrying out of His own great purposes; and therefore these purposes will only be effected in proportion to man's faithfulness in fulfilling the charge laid upon him. The doubter asks, 'Why has not Christianity done more in the world?' Here is the answer;—'Because man has not done more.' Christ could do His work without man's aid, but it is His holy will that man's faithfulness should be in the main the measure of the growth of His kingdom.

"Baptizing them" &c. Thus does our Lord make the holy Sacrament of Baptism a special mark and an essential ordinance of His Church (See on iii. 17.). We cannot call this the first institution of Baptism, for it was practised before (See on St. John iv. 1, 2.). Rather it is a Divine adoption and enforcement of the rite as the door of admission to the Church, and thus its first institution as a *Christian Sacrament*. The "baptizing and teaching" are the two great ways of 'making 'disciples' of all nations. Our Church limits the use of the word 'Sacrament' to those two rites for which we have our Lord's own express command. Thus this passage gives to Baptism that special character. It was "ordained by Christ Himself."

"In the name." This is more strictly '*into* the Name,' and the difference is important, for to be baptized *into* the Name implies

A.D. 30. 20 [m] teaching them to observe all things what-
[m] Acts 2. 42. soever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.

being brought into covenant with, or into membership with, Him who is named.

20. "Lo, I am with you" &c. How blessed and how comforting this great promise! Not only is the Comforter to abide with the Church for ever, but Christ Himself will be with it, and because He is with it, and in it, "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (xvi. 18.). Are we to confine this gracious promise, and the foregoing command, to the *Apostles* only, and through them to the ministers of Christ's Church? Surely not. The command and the promise are to the Church universal, and to all its members. Yet the works here commanded must plainly be performed by the Church *through its appointed ministers.* Moreover the presence of Christ will be with each, strengthening him according to his office and his need: with the minister in his baptizing and teaching, with the disciple in his believing and obeying. But it can by no means be gathered that, because the command to baptize and teach is given to the universal Church, therefore every member of that Church has an equal right to baptize and teach. "To every man his work" is the Lord's rule. But let us return to the promise with which St. Matthew ends his history, "Lo, I am with "you alway, even unto the end of the world."—"Oh, most gracious "and blessed promise! What can we desire more than to have Christ "with us all our days, even to the end,—not present with us locally "and sensibly, in bodily Presence, but in our hearts and to our faith! "The manner of His Presence is a mystery. We see Him not; but "we are to believe that we possess Him, and have been brought under "the virtue of His saving Hand. He is *with us* now, in this world; "and, if we are faithful to Him, we shall be *with Him* for ever in "the world to come. Amen." (*P. Young*).

"Amen." This word ends each of the four Gospels, being a solemn confirmation of their truth. The literal meaning is 'verily,' or 'truly,' and here, as at the end of a Creed, the sense is, 'Truly so it is.' Some however would rather join the "Amen" in this place with the promise immediately foregoing, as an expression of hearty thankfulness, and full confidence in its fulfilment.

20. "*Amen.*" It is right to mention that the "Amen" is not found in some of the ancient copies of this and the other Gospels, and is therefore supposed by many to have been added at an after time.

THE GOSPEL

ACCORDING TO

SAINT MARK.

COMMENTARY.

TITLE.

SAINT MARK.—No mention of St. Mark is found in the Gospels. He is first named in Acts xii, where we read that St. Peter, after his miraculous escape from prison, "came to the house of Mary the mother of "John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together "praying." From this we gather: 1. that St. Mark's home was in Jerusalem, so that he may have had opportunities of seeing and hearing part of what he relates, though whether as a believer or not at the time we cannot tell: 2. that his mother was a woman of some importance, at least among the Christians, who assembled for prayer at her house. St. Mark's mother was sister to St. Barnabas (Col. iv. 10.). St. Mark himself was converted to Christianity by St. Peter, who calls him "Marcus *my son*" (1 St. Peter v. 13.). He started with St. Paul and St. Barnabas (his uncle) upon their first missionary journey, and visited with them the island of Cyprus, with which his family was connected (Acts iv. 36.), but on reaching Asia Minor, "John" (compare Acts xv. 37, 38.), "departing from them, returned "to Jerusalem" (Acts xiii. 13.). This was the cause of a dispute and separation between the two Apostles on their planning a second missionary journey, St. Barnabas naturally wishing to take his nephew with him, but St. Paul not thinking it good to do so, on account of his having so soon deserted them on the former journey. Thus the uncle and nephew left St. Paul's company, and together revisited Cyprus. After this we have only the short and scattered, but deeply interesting, notices of the Evangelist which occur in the Epistles. These are three only. 1. He is found to be with St. Paul in his first imprisonment in Rome, since he joins in the salutations to the Colossians (Col. iv. 10.), and to Philemon (Philem. 24.). (In the former of these two places St. Paul seems to allude to some distrust of him on the part of the Colossians, which may very well have been the result of the circumstances connected with his forsaking the work in Asia Minor.) 2. We next hear of him as being with St. Peter at Babylon, from which place that Apostle wrote his first epistle (1 St. Pet. v. 13.). 3. Lastly we find St. Paul, in his second imprisonment in Rome, anxious to have St. Mark with him (2 Tim. iv. 11.); and how entirely his feelings towards him had changed since the dispute with St. Barnabas is plain from the reason he gives for his wish—"for he is profitable to me for the ministry."

When we pass from Scripture to the witness of the early Church, we find that it was a universal belief that St. Mark was the companion of St. Peter's last years, and that he wrote his Gospel as a record of that Apostle's teaching, if not under his actual direction. There is less evidence as to the *place* of writing, though Rome, and Alexandria in Egypt, are both mentioned, the former probably because St. Peter is believed to have suffered martyrdom in Rome, and the latter because St. Mark is said in his later years to have presided over the Church of Alexandria as its first bishop. St. Mark wrote his Gospel in Greek. Its date is probably some time very shortly after that of St. Matthew's Gospel, and before the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

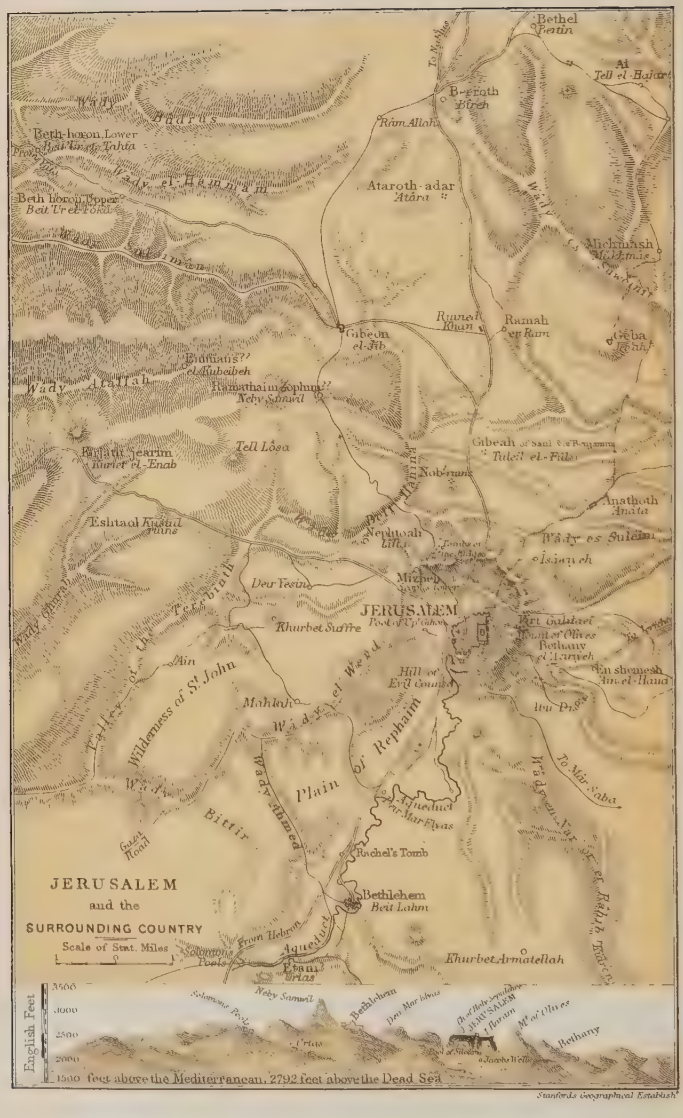
St. Mark's Gospel was undoubtedly written chiefly for *Gentile* Christians, possibly (according to ancient tradition) for the use of the Church in Rome. It is remarkable for the absence of quotations from the Old Testament (though it opens with one), and for the explanation of Jewish words and customs.

The Evangelist St. Mark appears to aim at a simple narrative of our Lord's life on earth. Beginning with confessing Him to be the "Son of God" (i. 1.), he thenceforth declares to us that Son of God as "manifest in the flesh." Thus we may take as a motto for this Gospel, St. Peter's description of our Lord,—"Jesus of Nazareth, "anointed by God with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went "about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil, "for God was with Him" (Acts x. 38.).

St. Mark's Gospel is very remarkable for the minuteness and vividness of its descriptions. Many little touches appear to come from the hand of an eye-witness, and we may very well suppose such to be due to the effect of St. Peter's frequent repetition of the scenes. Indeed, even if we suppose, as seems natural, much of St. Mark's Gospel to be drawn from the same sources as, if not founded upon, St. Matthew's, yet there are few portions which have not some new and striking feature added; and this Gospel accordingly possesses a descriptive vividness of style peculiarly its own.

The Collect for St. Mark's Day.

O Almighty God, who hast instructed Thy holy Church with the heavenly doctrine of thy Evangelist Saint Mark; Give us grace, that, being not like children carried away with every blast of vain doctrine, we may be established in the truth of Thy holy Gospel; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



Stanford's Geographical Establish.

CHAPTER I.

A.D. 26. 30th Year of our Lord's life.

1 *The office of John the Baptist.* 9 *Jesus is baptized,* 12 *tempted,* 14 *He preacheth:* 16 *calleth Peter, Andrew, James and John:* 23 *healeth one that had a devil,* 29 *Peter's mother in law,* 32 *many diseased persons,* 41 *and cleanseth the leper.*

THE beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, [a] the Son of God;

[a] Matt. 14. 33. Luke 1. 35. John 1. 34.

2 as it is written in the prophets, [b] **Behold, I send My messenger before Thy face, which shall prepare Thy way before Thee.** Mal. 3. 1.

[b] Matt. 11. 10. Luke 7. 27.

3 [c] **The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight.** Is. 40. 3.

[c] John 1. 15, 23.

4 [d] John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance [2] for the remission of sins.

[d] John 3. 23.

[2] Or, *unto.*

CHAPTER I.

1—8. St. John the Baptist.

St. Matt. iii. 1—12. St. Luke iii. 1—18.

1. **"The beginning of the gospel" &c.** This verse seems to be a sort of opening title to what follows, like the first verse of St. Matthew. It would be better to put a full stop at the end of it. The stops are no part of the original Scriptures, but have been added in later times to make the sense clearer (See on ix. 1., and *Note* on iii. 19.).

2. **"In the prophets."** Malachi and Isaiah, for St. Mark here combines the two prophecies, which appear on separate occasions in the other Gospels.

It is noted (See on Title) that St. Mark gives very few quotations from the Old Testament Scriptures, yet he opens his Gospel with these concerning St. John the Baptist, as though, once for all, to link the Old Testament on to the New, and show to his Gentile readers that the great things he is about to tell came to pass "as it is written." After this, he says little about the Old Testament, for the Gentile will not receive the New Testament through the Old, but will be led to the Old through the New.

"Before Thee." It should be observed that although the prophecy is quoted in the Gospels as though spoken *to Christ*, in Malachi God speaks of *Himself* only. It is "before Me"—not "before Thee." The Evangelists, and our Lord Himself, constantly give rather the meaning of prophecies than the exact words; and here we see how completely they speak as though Christ and God are One.

4. **"The baptism of repentance for the remission of sins."** St. John's baptism was a pledge and sign and profession of repentance, and doubtless those who came to it as true penitents received the remission, or pardon, of their sins, of which it also was the sign. For the washing of water would fitly represent both the internal cleansing of the grace of repentance, and the external cleansing of the pardon of God. In

A. D. 26.

5 And there went out unto him all the land of Judæa, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.

6 And John was clothed with camel's hair, and with a girdle of a skin about his loins; and he did
e Lev. 11. 22. eat [e] locusts and wild honey;

f John 1. 27. Acts 13. 25. 7 and preached, saying, [f] There cometh One mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose.

g Acts 1. 5. & 11. 16. & 19. 4. 8 [g] I indeed have baptized you with water: but He shall baptize you [h] with the Holy Ghost.

h Isai. 44. 3. Joel 2. 28. Acts 2. 4. & 10. 45. & 11. 15, 16. 1 Cor. 12. 13. 9 ¶ And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan.

A. D. 27. 30th Year of our Lord's life. 10 [i] And straightway coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens [2] opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon Him:

i John 1. 32. 2 Or, *cloven, or, rent.* k Ps. 2. 7. ch. 9. 7. 11 and there came a voice from heaven, *saying*, [k] Thou art My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

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other words St. John's baptism was the sign of both sanctifying and justifying grace. Yet Christian baptism has a higher promise yet (See on St. Matt. iii. 11.).

5. "**All the land of Judæa.**" Perhaps we do not always remember what a very great religious movement, or 'revival' (to use a word sometimes applied to religious movements), this was. It appears to have stirred the people very deeply, though the chief priests and Pharisees were too proud to yield to it. Observe how carefully the Baptist guarded against any wild and self-deluding fancies by the practical advice he gave to those who came to him (St. Luke iii. 10—14.).

9—11. The Baptism of Christ.

St. Matt. iii. 13—17. St. Luke iii. 21, 22.

9. "**Jesus came.**" Thus is the Lord first introduced by St. Mark. He comes forward, in the ripeness of full age, to be proclaimed by the voice from heaven as the "**Beloved Son.**" Little encouragement is given in the Gospels to that curious spirit, which would take delight in dwelling upon the early years of Jesus, and which gave rise, in primitive times, to a false 'Gospel of the Childhood' of our Lord. The Holy Ghost knew that such records would only draw away the mind from the great work of the Redeemer. Therefore this veil over His earlier years.

10. "**Opened.**" St. Mark uses a stronger word here than that used by St. Matthew and St. Luke. It means literally 'cleft' or 'rent asunder.'

12 ¶ And immediately the Spirit driveth Him into A.D. 27.
the wilderness.

13 And He was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto Him.

14 ¶ Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus A.D. 28. 32nd Year of our Lord's life.
came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,

15 and saying, [l]The time is fulfilled, and [m]the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

[l] Dan. 9. 25. Gal. 4. 4. Eph. 1. 10.
[m] Matt. 3. 2.

16 Now as He walked by the sea of Galilee, He

12, 13. The Temptation.

St. Matt. iv. 1—11. St. Luke iv. 1—13.

12. "**Immediately.**" This is a very common word with St. Mark, who passes rapidly, as if full of eagerness in the telling of his story, from one point to another.

"**Driveth.**" This is one of St. Mark's strong vigorous words.

13. "**With the wild beasts.**" This is named only by St. Mark. The lions touched not Daniel because God sent His Angel and shut their mouths so that they should not hurt him. *Now* the wild beasts know the presence of their Lord and Creator, and obey His will.

14—20. The beginning of Christ's Ministry, and calling of the first disciples.

St. Matt. iv. 12—25. St. Luke v. 1—11.

15. "**The time is fulfilled.**" That is, the set time of waiting and preparation, the time of God's sending His servants the prophets, the time of the old covenant. And now God is about to speak to us by a "Son" (Heb. i. 1, 2.).

"**Repent ye, and believe the gospel.**" Christ takes up the preaching of the Baptist (See on St. Matt. iii. 2.). He is in truth His own Forerunner, for His earlier teaching is ever preparing the way for His later. Yet a new word is even now added: "Repent, *and believe.*" Doubtless, when "Repent" alone was the Baptist's cry, some faith was also supposed: and doubtless also the preaching of faith always supposes a true repentance: for the two—repentance and faith—are inseparably joined together. Yet the "Believe" must ever come more and more to the front, as the Object of all living faith becomes more and more revealed. True, it is not yet, 'Believe in Me,' but they that believed "the gospel of the kingdom" would not be long in learning to believe in the King.

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14. "*The gospel of the kingdom of God.*" See on St. Matt. iv. 23.

A.D. 28. saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.

17 And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after Me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.

[n] Matt. 19. 27. 18 And straightway [n] they forsook their nets, and followed Him.

19 And when He had gone a little farther thence, He saw James the *son* of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets.

20 And straightway He called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after Him.

[o] Matt. 4. 13. Luke 4. 31. 21 ¶ [o] And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath day He entered into the synagogue, and taught.

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16. "Casting a net into the sea." No need to leave our daily calling and labour to find Jesus. Let us do our duty where God has placed us, as unto Him, and lo! Jesus will find us. If He wants us elsewhere, He will call us away. If not, He will stay with us.

17. "Fishers of men." It is a common remark, but one not the less worth thinking about, that those who were called to do the grandest work, to make the profoundest changes, and to found the most wonderful society, the world has ever known, were simple men, taken from an ordinary and humble calling. Their success owed nothing to worldly aids. Its secret lay not in the wisdom, or wealth, or rank, or influence, of those who won it. What else then could have gained such great triumphs with such small means, save the power of an Almighty Arm? That these fishermen did not wholly give up all connection with their former trade we may gather from the fact that after the Resurrection they returned to it for a little while (See on St. John xxi. 3.).

20. "With the hired servants." This is an addition given by St. Mark, and very probably learnt by him from St. Peter's lips. We see from this hint that the fishermen were not of the very poorest, though their possessing their own boats, and employing hired servants, do not imply more than that they were prospering in their trade.

21—28. The casting out of a devil in the synagogue at Capernaum.

St. Luke iv. 33—37.

21. "On the sabbath day." It was our Lord's custom to attend the Jewish synagogues on the Sabbath. He ever showed a pattern of respect for the national Church and services. We here see Him stand forth as the great Prophet, teaching with an authority which astonished His hearers (See on St. Matt. iv. 23. and vii. 28.).

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21. "*Capernaum.*" See on St. Matt. iv. 13.

22 [p] And they were astonished at His doctrine: for He taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes. A. D. 28. [p] Matt. 7. 28.

23 And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out,

24 saying, Let *us* alone; [q] what have we to do with Thee, Thou Jesus of Nazareth? art Thou come to destroy us? I know Thee who Thou art, the Holy One of God. [q] Matt. 8. 29.

25 And Jesus [r] rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. [r] ver. 34.

26 And when the unclean spirit [s] had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him. [s] ch. 9. 20.

27 And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine *is* this? for with authority commandeth He even the unclean spirits, and they do obey Him.

28 And immediately His fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee.

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23. "A man with an unclean spirit." No doubt this man was not at all times violent, or he would not have been in the synagogue. It was the presence of Christ, which caused the evil spirit to cry out.

24. "The Holy One of God." The testimony which evil spirits bore to our Lord's Person and character is very remarkable. They plainly possessed a spiritual insight far beyond that of man. The presence of Christ is a trouble to them. They know His power, and holiness, and they shrink and cower before Him. They "believe and tremble" (St. James ii. 19.). He has but now conquered their prince; and they may well ask, "Art Thou come to destroy us?" But not *them* as yet, only their *works*. They are reserved "unto the judgment of the great "day" (St. Jude 6.), but "for this purpose the Son of God was mani- "fested that He might destroy the works of the devil" (1 St. John iii. 8.). We may behold in these evil spirits, who knew and acknowledged Christ, the picture of that character which is most hateful to God,—namely, knowledge without love, or outward acknowledgment of Christ with inward hatred of His holiness.

25. "Hold thy peace." Christ will not accept the witness of evil. It might have been a stumbling-block to some, if He had suffered His power and His holiness to be proclaimed by devils, besides that many would have declared such witness to be lying witness.

26. "Torn him." This does not mean 'wounded him,' but simply '*convulsed* him,' or 'threw him into a fit.'

27. "They were all amazed." It seems that as yet the Pharisees had not begun to find fault with our Lord for His miracles of mercy performed on the Sabbath (See St. Matt. xii. 10.).

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23. "*An unclean spirit.*" See on St. Matt. viii. 28.

A.D. 28.

29 ¶ And forthwith, when they were come out of the synagogue, they entered into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.

30 But Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever, and anon they tell Him of her.

31 And He came and took her by the hand, and lifted her up; and immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto them.

32 And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto Him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils.

33 And all the city was gathered together at the door.

34 And He healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils; and [t] suffered not the devils [2] to speak, because they knew Him.

[t] ch. 3. 12. See Acts 16. 17, 18.

[2] Or, *to say that they knew him.*

35 ¶ And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, He went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.

29—34. Healing of Simon's wife's mother, and many others.

St. Matt. viii. 14—17. St. Luke iv. 38—41.

29. "The house of Simon and Andrew." Though natives of Bethsaida (St. John i. 44.), these brothers seem to have removed to Capernaum, which was not far off, and made that place their home, so far as they could call any place 'home.' Possibly St. Peter's wife's family belonged to Capernaum.

31. "He took her by the hand." St. Matthew has simply "touched "her hand," so that we may gather that He took her hand lightly, and not so as to use any force in raising her up, this being the simple result of His miraculous healing.

33. "All the city was gathered together at the door." This is one of St. Mark's little descriptive touches, which add so much force to his style. Here too again we can well understand that, if he were not eye-witness of the scene himself, he knew it, as it were, by heart from the lips of one who was (See on Title.). No doubt the fame of the earlier miracles, especially of that in the synagogue, collected so large a multitude together to St. Peter's house. There they would probably soon hear of the new miracle, and perhaps see St. Peter's mother-in-law at the door. Probably our Lord passed about among the crowd in the street, laying His healing Hands on the sick, and casting out devils, until it was too dark to go on.

35—39. Christ retires to pray, and preaches throughout Galilee.

St. Luke iv. 42—44.

35. "A great while before day." Blessed are they who, like their

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34. "*Suffered not the devils to speak.*" See on 25.

36 And Simon and they that were with him followed after Him. A.D. 28.

37 And when they had found Him, they said unto Him, All *men* seek for Thee.

38 And He said unto them, Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for [u] therefore came I forth.

39 [x] And He preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out devils.

[u] Isai. 61. 1. John 16. 28. & 17. 4.
[x] Matt. 4. 23.

40 ¶ And there came a leper to Him, beseeching Him, and kneeling down to Him, and saying unto Him, If Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean.

41 And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth *His* hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean.

42 And as soon as He had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed.

43 And He straitly charged him, and forthwith sent him away;

44 and saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man: but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things [y] which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

[y] Lev. 14. 3, 4, 10.

45 But he went out, and began to publish *it* much, and to blaze abroad the matter, insomuch

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Master, can rescue from sleep precious hours for that silent and undisturbed communion with God which the busy day denies them. Even in the busiest life time must be found for prayer. Christ's life is divided between labour and prayer. So is the blessed existence of the holy Angels. And they who would be like Christ, and do God's will as the Angels, must labour actively and pray devoutly.

38. "**Therefore came I forth.**" That is, from God. Our Lord means that His work was to go from place to place, and not bestow all His blessings on one.

40—45. The cleansing of a leper.

St. Matt. viii. 1—4. St. Luke v. 12—14.

40. "**Kneeling down to Him.**" St. Mark is here, as usual, more minute in his description than St. Matthew, though in this particular case St. Luke also mentions that the leper fell on his face.

45. "**Began to publish it much.**" We cannot greatly condemn this man for thus disobeying our Lord's command to keep the miracle

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39. "*Preached in their synagogues.*" See on St. Matt. iv. 23.

A.D. 28. that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city,
z ch. 2. 13. but was without in desert places: z and they came to Him from every quarter.

CHAPTER II.

1 *Christ healeth one sick of the palsy,* 14 *calleth Matthew from the receipt of custom,* 15 *eateth with publicans and sinners,* 18 *excuseth His disciples for not fasting,* 23 *and for plucking the ears of corn on the sabbath day.*

AND again He entered into Capernaum after *some* days; and it was noised that He was in the house.

2 And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive *them*, no, not so much as about the door: and He preached the word unto them.

3 And they come unto Him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four.

4 And when they could not come nigh unto Him for the press, they uncovered the roof where He was:

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secret. It would no doubt have been better had he humbly obeyed, even though he might not see the reason, but his joy and gratitude were such that he could not refrain from telling of the great mercy he had received. The effect of his conduct was probably unexpected to himself, for it banished Jesus from the city, the crowds which followed Him out of mere curiosity being a hindrance to His work. Even in the "desert "places" great numbers flocked to Him, but we can easily understand that the crowd in a town would be far more troublesome. Moreover the seeking out our Lord in a desert place showed a desire to see Him, which was more than the mere curiosity of an idle crowd.

CHAPTER II.

1—12. Healing of the paralytic man at Capernaum.

St. Matt. ix. 1—8. St. Luke v. 17—26.

1. "**Again.**" Jesus had been there before, immediately after the call of the four disciples from their fishing (i. 21.).

"**The house.**" That is, "the house of Simon and Andrew" (See on i. 29, 33.).

2. "**He preached**" &c. This may have been either in a room, or in the open square court which often formed the centre of Jewish houses.

3. "**Borne of four.**" That is, 'carried by four bearers.' This is one of the little marks of accuracy so noticeable in this Gospel.

4. "**They uncovered the roof.**" St. Luke says, "They went upon "the house-top, and let him down through the tiling." In Jewish houses there was frequently an outside staircase leading to the house-top (See St. Matt. xxiv. 17.), which was flat, and served as a place

and when they had broken *it* up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay. A.D. 28.

5 When Jesus saw their faith, He said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.

6 But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts,

7 Why doth this *Man* thus speak blasphemies? [a]who can forgive sins but God only?

[a] Job 14. 4. Isai. 43. 25.

8 And immediately when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, He said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts?

9 Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, *Thy* sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?

10 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (He saith to the sick of the palsy,)

11 I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house.

12 And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.

13 ¶ And He went forth again by the sea side; and all the multitude resorted unto Him, and He taught them.

14 And as He passed by, He saw Levi the *son*

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to walk upon (2 Sam. xi. 2.), or for prayer (Acts x. 9.). The open court in the middle was sometimes covered with a canvass awning to protect it from the heat, and the sides of the flat roof which ran round the open court were protected by parapets (or low walls) to prevent persons falling over. We cannot tell precisely what the bearers of this poor man did to enable them to lower him in his couch down to the spot where Jesus stood. They may have only broken away part of the parapet over the court; or, if we suppose our Lord to have been in a room, they may have found the ceiling easy to remove, and have broken away sufficient to enable them to accomplish their purpose. Faith and love overcome all difficulties to get to Christ.

13—17. The calling and feast of St. Matthew.

St. Matt. ix. 9—13. St. Luke v. 27—32.

14. "Levi the son of Alphæus." St. Mark and St. Luke give the

A.D. 28. of Alphæus sitting [2]at the receipt of custom, and said unto him, Follow Me. And he arose and followed Him.

[2] Or, *at the place where the custom was received.*

15 And it came to pass, that, as Jesus sat at meat in his house, many publicans and sinners sat also together with Jesus and His disciples: for there were many, and they followed Him.

16 And when the scribes and Pharisees saw Him eat with publicans and sinners, they said unto His disciples, How is it that He eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners?

17 When Jesus heard *it*, He saith unto them, [b]They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

[b] Matt. 18. 11. Luke 19. 10. 1 Tim. 1. 15.

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name by which St. Matthew was known at this time. He himself speaks of himself under his new name of Matthew. The Alphæus here spoken of is a different person from the father of James the Less the Apostle (St. Matt. x. 3.).

"At the receipt of custom." The office, or place of receiving the 'custom' or tax. Our Lord was walking by the side of the Sea of Galilee at Capernaum, and it is therefore supposed that Levi may have been employed in collecting the tax laid by the Roman government on all merchandize brought into Galilee across the Lake. This would make his office a sort of little 'custom-house', the name given to the public offices at our principal sea-ports where the duty is paid upon certain foreign articles brought into this country.

"Follow Me." "Whenever, in the midst of the concerns of the "world, conscience whispers to us that we are neglecting our souls, "or the souls of our brethren, that we are becoming covetous, or dis- "honest, or selfish, or exacting, or envious of the prosperity of others, "or discontented or impatient with our lot, we may, if we please, hear "Christ's voice calling to us, "*Follow Me*": we may see the bright "track of His own gracious footsteps pointing out the way to us, and "His look of tender love beckoning us to follow. Oh the blessedness "of those who have eyes to see, and hearts to obey Him! What "a happy exchange, to give up this world,—to give up, that is, the "cares and love of this world,—and to gain the next; to give up "earth, and to win heaven!" (*Peter Young.*)

15. "There were many, and they followed Him." There were many of the class of publicans and sinners, who flocked after Jesus (unless, as an ancient commentator supposes, "him" in this place means St. Matthew), and whom the new disciple gladly received into his house.

17. "I came not to call the righteous," &c. By the "righteous" is plainly here meant those who thought themselves righteous, and by "sinners" those who knew themselves to be sinners. "A great encou-

18 ¶ And the disciples of John and of the Pharisees used to fast: and they come and say unto Him, Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but Thy disciples fast not? A.D. 28.

19 And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? as long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast.

20 But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days.

21 No man also seweth a piece of [2] new cloth on an old garment: else the new piece that filled it up taketh away from the old, and the rent is made worse. [2] Or, *raw*, or, *unwrought*.

22 And no man putteth new wine into old bottles: else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred: but new wine must be put into new bottles.

23 ¶ And it came to pass, that He went through the corn fields on the sabbath day; and His disciples began, as they went, [c] to pluck the ears of corn. [c] Deut. 23. 25.

24 And the Pharisees said unto Him, Behold, why do they on the sabbath day that which is not lawful?

25 And He said unto them, Have ye never read [d] what David did, when he had need, and was an hungred, he, and they that were with him? [d] 1 Sam. 21. 6.

26 How he went into the house of God in the

"ragement to *sinners*," says Archbishop Leighton, "but no encourage-"ment to *sin*. He came to call sinners; but it was to call them to "repentance":—that is, to call them from their sins. Jesus saves, not alone from the penalty, but also from the power, of sin (See on St. Matt. i. 21.).

18—22. Discourse upon Fasting.

St. Matt. ix. 14—17. St. Luke v. 33—39.

18. **"The disciples of John and of the Pharisees."** St. Matthew speaks as though the former put the question as to fasting, St. Luke as though the latter. St. Mark shows how both are right, inasmuch as the question was asked by both. We may wisely learn from this how very easily other seeming differences may possibly be explained.

A.D. 28. days of Abiathar the high priest, and did eat the
e Exod. 29. 32, 33. Lev. 24. 9. shewbread, [e] which is not lawful to eat but for the priests, and gave also to them which were with him?

27 And He said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath:

f Matt. 12. 8. 28 therefore [f] the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.

CHAPTER III.

1 *Christ healeth the withered hand,* 10 *and many other infirmities:* 11 *rebuketh the unclean spirits:* 13 *chooseth His twelve apostles:* 22 *convinceth the blasphemy of casting out devils by Beelzebub:* 31 *and sheweth who are His brother, sister, and mother.*

AND He entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there which had a withered hand.

23—28. The plucking of corn on the Sabbath.

St. Matt. xii. 1—8. St. Luke vi. 1—5.

26. "In the days of Abiathar the high priest." Ahimelech the father of Abiathar was really high-priest at the time of this occurrence, and gave the shewbread to David (See 1 Sam. xxi. 1—6.), but he was slain shortly after, and was succeeded by Abiathar, who continued high-priest during the reign of king David. Thus, Abiathar being the well-known high-priest of David's time, and being probably with his father at Nob on the occasion referred to, our Lord speaks of the event as in his days, although he had not yet actually succeeded to the high-priesthood. There is however considerable uncertainty about the names in this portion of the history (See *Note.*), and it is possible that the occurrence of the wrong name may be rather to be sought in the Old Testament than in the New. However, the correctness of the name being a matter of not the least doctrinal or practical importance, it is possible to suppose it misquoted by St. Mark, or that the error crept into some very early copy (See concerning the name "Jeremy" for Zechariah, *Note* on St. Matt. xxvii. 9.).

27. "The sabbath was made for man," &c. St. Mark alone records this most important saying. The principle of it is to put the end above the means. God's ordinances were meant for man's good. But no rule is without its exceptions; and there will be cases where the literal observance of the ordinance would not be for man's good. In such cases we should prefer man's good to a slavish obedience to the ordinance.

CHAPTER III.

1—6. Healing of the man with the withered hand.

St. Matt. xii. 9—13. St. Luke vi. 6—11.

1. "The synagogue." Before in the corn fields, now in the syna-

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26. "*Abiathar.*" "There is considerable confusion in the names about this part of the history. Ahimelech himself is called *Ahiah* 1 Sam. xiv. 3; and whereas (1 Sam. xxii. 20.) Ahimelech *has a son* "*Abiathar*, in 2 Sam. viii. 17. Ahimelech *is the son of Abiathar*, and in 1 Chron. xviii. 16. *Abimelech*. Amidst this variation we can hardly undertake to explain the difficulty in the text" (*Alford.*).

2 And they watched Him, whether He would heal him on the sabbath day; that they might accuse Him. A.D. 28.

3 And He saith unto the man which had the withered hand, [2] Stand forth.

[2] Gr. *Arise, stand forth in the midst.*

4 And He saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace.

5 And when He had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the [3] hardness of their hearts, He saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched *it* out: and his hand was restored whole as the other.

[3] Or, *blindness.*

6 And the Pharisees went forth, and straightway took counsel with [a] the Herodians against Him, how they might destroy Him.

[a] Matt. 22. 16.

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gogue, Christ's enemies are watching that they may accuse Him. Oh miserable spirit which can turn the holy day of rest into a day of restless suspicion and relentless persecution! While they accuse Jesus of profaning the Sabbath by His works of love and mercy, truly they are profaning the Sabbath, and the synagogue too, by their unholy tempers.

4. **"Is it lawful to do good, or to do evil?" &c.** It is to be observed here that *not* to do good is counted as doing evil. So that our Lord goes far beyond the bare answer to the question asked Him. He is not content to say that it *is lawful* to do an act of mercy on the Sabbath: He says, by His question, that it is *unlawful not* to do it. Not to do the good would be doing the evil (See on St. Matt. xxv. 30.).

5. **"When He had looked" &c.** St. Mark, careful of minute particulars, frequently records our Lord's *looks* (See 34. viii. 33. x. 21. and on St. Matt. xix. 26.).

"With anger, being grieved." Anger is righteous when aroused against sin. God has implanted this emotion in the human heart, and, like all others, it has its proper place and object and work. St. Paul says, "Be ye angry and sin not" (Eph. iv. 26.). It was an act of righteous anger which drove the buyers and sellers out of the temple (See on St. John ii. 15.). The word here translated "grieved" means 'sorrowing 'for them.' How beautifully are the varied emotions of our human nature blended and apportioned in Him who was perfect Man. Behold here anger at the sin, yet mingled with sympathy with, and sorrow for, the sinner.

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6. "*Herodians.*" See on St. Matt. xxii. 16.

A.D. 28. 7 ¶ But Jesus withdrew Himself with His disciples to the sea: and a great multitude from Galilee fol-
b Luke 6. 17. lowed Him, [b] and from Judæa,

8 and from Jerusalem, and from Idumæa, and *from* beyond Jordan; and they about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they had heard what great things He did, came unto Him.

9 And He spake to His disciples, that a small ship should wait on Him because of the multitude, lest they should throng Him.

10 For He had healed many; insomuch that they
2 Or, *rushed.* [2] pressed upon Him for to touch Him, as many as had plagues.

c ch. 1. 23, 24. Luke 4. 41. d Matt. 14. 33. ch. 1. 1. 11 [c] And unclean spirits, when they saw Him, fell down before Him, and cried, saying, [d] Thou art the Son of God.

e ch. 1. 25, 34. 12 And [e] He straitly charged them that they should not make Him known.

7—12. Jesus teaching and healing by the Sea of Galilee.

St. Matt. xii. 14—21.

7. "The sea." Always in the Gospels meaning the Sea of Galilee (See on St. Matt. iv. 18.).

8. "Idumæa." A region to the South of the Holy Land, called in the Old Testament Edom, from Esau, who was also called Edom, and whose family settled there, the Edomites or Idumæans being his descendants.

"Tyre and Sidon." These two cities were to the North (See on St. Matt. xi. 21.), as Idumæa to the South, of the Holy Land, so that St. Mark implies that people came from all quarters. It is observable that Samaria, which lay in the very middle of the Holy Land, between Galilee and Judæa, is never named among the countries from which hearers flocked to our Lord. Its inhabitants were more hostile to the Jews than other neighbouring races (See on St. Matt. x. 5.).

9. "A small ship." This was a frequent pulpit for our Lord (See St. Matt. xiii. 2. St. Luke v. 3.).

10. "As many as had plagues." That is, diseases. So long as these were crushing around in order to touch Him, it was impossible that Jesus could address the people. He denies for a little while His healing touch to the body that He may apply the healing touch of His blessed doctrine to the soul. The sick in body are parted from Him by the water, but meanwhile they are receiving precious medicines for their souls' diseases.

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12. "*He straitly charged them*" &c. See on St. Matt. viii. 4.

13 ¶ [f] And He goeth up into a mountain, and calleth *unto Him* whom He would: and they came unto Him. A.D. 28. [f] Luke 9. 1.

14 And He ordained twelve, that they should be with Him, and that He might send them forth to preach,

15 and to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils:

16 and Simon [g] He surnamed Peter; [g] John 1. 42.

17 and James the *son* of Zebedee, and John the brother of James; and He surnamed them Boanerges, which is, The sons of thunder:

18 and Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the *son* of Alphæus, and Thaddæus, and Simon the Canaanite,

19 and Judas Iscariot, which also betrayed Him: and they went [2] into an house. [2] Or, *home.*

13—19. Calling of the Twelve Apostles.

St. Matt. x. 1—4. St. Luke vi. 12—16.

13. "Into a mountain." Where, as we learn from St. Luke, He "continued all night in prayer to God." Thus does the Lord Himself, making Himself very Man, prepare for the solemn consecration of His Twelve chosen ones. O blessed Twelve, crowned with the grace won by those night-long intercessions! So would the Church ever send forth her ministers with fasting and prayer (See Acts xiii. 3.). For this purpose the Ember weeks are appointed, with their special prayers for those to be ordained.

"Calleth unto Him whom He would." From St. Luke we gather that Jesus called to Him a number of disciples, out of whom He selected the Twelve. The Disciples were doubtless flocking after Him, and either did not find Him till daylight, or remained at a little distance until His prayers were ended, when He called them up close to Him.

14. "That they should be with Him, and that He might send" &c. Observe here an earthly copy of the Angelic life above. The Angels stand in the presence of God, and are sent forth on His missions of mercy (See on St. Luke i. 19.). So the Apostles were partly to be with Christ, and partly to be sent forth on their work of love. It was in view of their being thus *sent forth* that they were called Apostles.

16. "Simon He surnamed Peter." But not on this occasion (See on St. John i. 42.).

17. "Boanerges." The sons of Zebedee were thus named probably from their powerful eloquence, or from their vehement character, of which we have several proofs (See ix. 38. x. 37. and chiefly St. Luke ix. 54.).

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19. "*And they went into an house.*" These words probably belong to what follows, rather than to what goes before. We must always remember that the division

A.D. 28.

20 ¶ And the multitude cometh together again,
h ch. 6. 31. [h] so that they could not so much as eat bread.
21 And when His [2] friends heard *of it*, they went
2 Or, *kinsmen*.
i John 7. 5. & 10. 20. out to lay hold on Him: [i] for they said, He is beside Himself.

22 ¶ And the scribes which came down from
k Mat. 9. 34. & 10. 25. John 7. 20. & 8. 48, 52. & 10. 20. Jerusalem said, [k] He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth He out devils.
23 And He called them *unto Him*, and said unto them in parables, How can Satan cast out Satan?
24 And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.
25 And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand.

20, 21. The anxiety of Jesus' friends about Him.

20. "**They could not so much as eat bread.**" This plainly refers to our Lord and His Apostles, not to the multitude. The constant pressure of the crowd seeking to be healed, or to witness the healing of others, prevented the opportunity of taking food.

21. "**His friends.**" Doubtless principally "His brethren and His "mother" (31.).

"**Went out to lay hold on Him.**" That is, they went forth, or set out, from the place where they heard of it, in order to 'constrain Him'—to 'get Him into their possession'—so as to insist on His taking needful rest and food.

"**They said, He is beside Himself.**" That is, 'He is mad.' This seems to have been said by His relatives, but it may mean, They who informed His relatives of His labours and want of food and rest said this. It was doubtless said in fear and anxiety; either literally, under the dread lest His incessant toil might have really affected His mind; or in the less literal sense, in which we constantly speak of persons as mad in doing certain things, when we only mean that they are foolishly neglectful of themselves.

22—27. The accusation of casting out devils by Beelzebub.

St. Matt. xii. 22—30. St. Luke xi. 14—23.

22. "**He hath Beelzebub.**" The immediate occasion of this blasphemous charge was (as we learn from St. Matthew and St. Luke) the casting out of a devil from one who was blind and dumb.

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into chapters and verses is no part of the original Gospel, the division into chapters having been finally settled in the year 1240, A. D., and the division into verses not till 1551 (See on ix. 1.). This may also be a suitable occasion to add that stops, though in use before the division into chapters and verses, were added in comparatively late times for the sake of clearness, and have been much varied in the course of time, so that we cannot attach much weight to them so far as they affect the sense.

26 And if Satan rise up against himself, and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end. A.D. 28.

27 [l] No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house. [l] Isai. 49. 24.

28 ¶ [m] Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: [m] 1 John 5. 16.

29 but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation:

30 because they said, He hath an unclean spirit.

31 ¶ There came then His brethren and His mother, and, standing without, sent unto Him, calling Him.

32 And the multitude sat about Him, and they said unto Him, Behold, Thy mother and Thy brethren without seek for Thee.

33 And He answered them, saying, Who is My mother, or My brethren?

34 And He looked round about on them which sat about Him, and said, Behold My mother and My brethren!

35 For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is My brother, and My sister, and mother.

28—30. Sin against the Holy Ghost.

St. Matt. xii. 31, 32. St. Luke xii. 10.

30. "Because they said," &c. This is a very important addition by St. Mark, and a great help towards understanding what is meant by blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, since it plainly implies that the scribes and Pharisees were guilty—or at least in danger—of it, when they said, "He hath an unclean spirit." They were wilfully, and in the face of the clearest evidence, ascribing to Satan the work of the Holy Spirit.

31—35. Christ's Mother and brethren.

St. Matt. xii. 46—50. St. Luke viii. 19—21.

31. "Sent unto Him, calling Him." We can hardly doubt for the purpose named above (21.), namely to "lay hold of Him," and rescue Him from such overwhelming and exhausting labour.

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31. "*His brethren.*" See on St. Matt. xiii. 55.

A.D. 28.

CHAPTER IV.

1 *The parable of the sower,* 14 *and the meaning thereof.* 21 *We must communicate the light of our knowledge to others.* 26 *The parable of the seed growing secretly,* 30 *and of the mustard seed.* 35 *Christ stilleth the tempest on the sea.*

AND He began again to teach by the sea side: and there was gathered unto Him a great multitude, so that He entered into a ship, and sat in the sea; and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land.

2 And He taught them many things by parables,
a ch. 12. 38. [a] and said unto them in His doctrine,

3 Hearken; Behold, there went out a sower to sow:

4 and it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the way side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up.

5 And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth:

6 but when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away.

7 And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit.

b John 15. 5. Col. 1. 6. 8 And other fell on good ground, [b] and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased; and brought

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1—9. The Sower.

St. Matt. xiii. 1—9. St. Luke viii. 4—8.

1. "He began again." We have already heard of His being on the Sea-side, teaching and healing (iii. 7—9.).

2. "In His doctrine." That is, 'in His teaching,' the Parable of the Sower being a specimen, or sample, selected from a large amount of doctrine.

3. "Hearken." This word is given only by St. Mark, but adds force and impressiveness to the Parable.

5. "Stony ground." The "rock" of St. Luke. Not ground full of loose stones, but a shallow soil upon a rocky bottom.

8. "That sprang up and increased." This expression is given only by St. Mark. It is remarkable when compared with the brief parable of the Seed growing secretly (26—29,), which is also found only in this Gospel. Possibly the growth of the spiritual life may have been a doctrine much prized by St. Mark, and possibly also a doctrine thus prized by him because holding a forward place in the teaching of St. Peter, as we find from his Epistles (See 1 St. Pet. ii. 2. 2 St. Pet. i. 5—7. iii. 18.). (Suggested by *Is. Williams.*)

forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred. A.D. 28.

9 And He said unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

10 ¶ And when He was alone, they that were about Him with the twelve asked of Him the parable.

11 And He said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto [c] them that are without, all *these* things are done in parables:

[c] 1 Cor. 5. 12. Col. 4. 5. 1 Thess. 4. 12. 1 Tim. 3. 7.

12 [d] **that seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and *their* sins should be forgiven them.**

[d] John 12. 40. Acts 28. 26. Rom. 11. 8. Isai. 6. 9, 10.

13 And He said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?

14 ¶ The sower soweth the word.

15 And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts.

10—13. Why Jesus used parables.

St. Matt. xiii. 10—17. St. Luke viii. 9, 10.

10. "**When He was alone.**" That is, when He had retired from the multitude, but His disciples being still with Him.

"**Asked of Him the parable.**" That is, 'about the parable.' St. Matthew says they asked His reason for speaking in parables. It is plain they asked both, for in each Gospel our Lord answers both.

11. "**Unto them that are without.**" That is, to those outside the circle of Christ's disciples—"to others" (St. Luke.).

13. "**Know ye not this parable?**" **&c.** This gentle rebuke implies 1. that the disciples ought to have been able to interpret our Lord's parables without His assistance; and, 2. that the Parable of the Sower is one of the plainest and easiest.

14—20. Explanation of the Sower.

St. Matt. xiii. 18—23. St. Luke viii. 11—15.

14. "**The Sower soweth the word.**" In St. Luke we read that "the seed is the word of God," and doubtless our Lord's will was to fix our thoughts more upon the *seed* than the Sower. For whether the Sower be Christ Himself, or any one of His appointed ministers, it matters not. The seed is the same, and it is with the growth of that seed that we are concerned.

A. D. 28.

16 And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness;

17 and have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.

18 And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word,

e 1 Tim. 6. 9, 17.

19 and the cares of this world, [e] and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.

20 And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive *it*, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred.

f Matt. 5. 15.

21 ¶ And He said unto them, Is a candle brought to be put under a [2] bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick?

2 The word in the original signifieth a less measure, as Matt. 5. 15.

g Matt. 10. 26. Luke 12. 2.

22 [g] For there is nothing hid, which shall not be manifested; neither was any thing kept secret, but that it should come abroad.

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19. "The lusts of other things." Such as of the "pleasures of this "life" (St. Luke.).

21—25. How to hear Christ's words.

St. Luke viii. 16—18. Compare St. Luke xi. 33—36.

21. "Is a candle" &c. The "candle" here seems to mean the light of Christ's doctrine, which He did not bring in order that it might be hidden and kept secret. The disciples might easily mistake our Lord's words when they asked Him to explain the Sower (11, 12.), and imagine the doctrine He taught was for His own favoured disciples, and not for the world at large. The "candlestick" probably means (as in Rev. i. 20.) the Church, which should hold aloft the light of Christ's teaching before the world. The "candle" is used of the disciples themselves, instead of the doctrine, in the Sermon on the Mount (See on St. Matt. v. 15.); though in truth the light is the same in either case, for Christ is Himself "the Light," and His disciples are only light, as reflecting Christ in their doctrine or in their lives. Whether the "bushel" and the "bed" have any distinct spiritual meaning—such as worldly business and cares (the "bushel") and sloth (the "bed")—is doubtful.

22. "There is nothing hid," &c. Our Lord seems to be speaking of those parts of His teaching which as yet were hidden from the world, and kept secret, being revealed only to such as could receive them, or even by them treasured up as mysteries to receive their meaning

23 [h] If any man have ears to hear, let him hear. A. D. 28.

24 And he said unto them, Take heed what ye hear: [i] with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear shall more be given.

[h] ver. 9. Matt. 11. 15.
[i] Matt. 7. 2. Luke 6. 38.

25 [k] For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath.

[k] Matt. 13. 12. & 25. 29. Luke 19. 26.

26 ¶ And He said, [l] So is the kingdom of God,

[l] Matt. 13. 24.

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afterwards. All these things were intended to "come abroad" and be made public at last; and it was the duty of Christ's servants to help in spreading abroad these divine truths. Our Lord uses these same words to declare the final triumph of His doctrine notwithstanding the opposition of the world (St. Matt. x. 26.).

24. "Take heed what ye hear." Consider what it is that ye hear—how precious, how blessed. In St. Luke it is, "Take heed *how* ye hear," and so we must interpret the one expression by the other, the two being only separate translations of the words our Lord really spoke. His full meaning would be, 'Take heed in what spirit ye hear, and how 'ye regard it.'

"With what measure" &c. This seems to have been one of our Lord's frequent sayings. We find it used in another sense in the Sermon on the Mount (St. Matt. vii. 2. St. Luke vi. 38.). Here the sense is not clear at first sight, but it may be gathered from the next verse, which is closely joined with it, and which leads us to interpret it thus: 'With what measure ye mete—or measure out—your own 'hearing, with the same shall fresh instruction be measured out to you.' In other words, 'In proportion to your faithfulness in receiving My 'teaching shall more truth be entrusted to you.' It is sometimes thought that the sense is, 'With what measure ye mete out the truth *to others*, 'it shall be measured to you,' but the former meaning agrees best with the whole passage.

25. "He that hath," &c. This saying is of the nature of a proverb, and is applied by our Lord to the case of the unprofitable servant in the Parable of the Talents (St. Matt. xxv. 29.). He that has profited by his privileges shall receive more, but from him that has neglected them even the privileges themselves shall be taken away.

26—29. Parable of the Seed growing secretly.

26. "So is the kingdom of God, as if" &c. The "kingdom of "God" in this Gospel and St. Luke's is used in precisely the same sense as the "kingdom of heaven" in St. Matthew's (See on St. Matt. iii. 2.). The meaning here is, 'There is a truth in God's kingdom of 'grace which is like a truth in His kingdom of nature.'

This short but very beautiful parable is the only one given by St. Mark alone. In its spiritual meaning it is most like the Parable of the Leaven (St. Matt. xiii. 33.), and it is remarkable that St. Mark places it where he does, next to the "Mustard-seed," instead of the "Leaven," as though he selected it from our Lord's many parables

A.D. 28. as if a man should cast seed into the ground;
27 and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how.
28 For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.
[2] Or, *ripe.* 29 But when the fruit is [2] brought forth, imme-
[m] Rev. 14. 15. diately [m] he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.

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to convey the same truth, that namely of the *inward* and gradual growth of Christ's kingdom in the hearts of its subjects (See on 8.).

"As if a man should cast seed" &c. We need not here curiously enquire who the "man" represents. It is not to the man who sowed, but to the growth of the seed sown, that our Lord directs our minds. The man belongs only to the framework of the parable, and not to the lesson it is meant to teach. By his sleeping and rising night and day is simply meant that, having sown the seed, the man goes about his other business, and leaves it to grow by that wondrous secret power of life which God has given to it.

28. "Of herself." Without any help or interference of man; but not without God.

"First the blade," &c. "This parable conveys a warning against "that erroneous view of religion, which looks for sudden bursts, and "violent changes, in the spiritual life of men; and it teaches that the "growth of genuine piety is gradual and almost invisible, like the "course of vegetation in the natural world" (*Wordsworth.*). We learn here how the seed grows which is once sown in the "good ground" of an "honest and good heart." There will be a gradual growth and increase, and we must not be disappointed if, when the blade appears, it does not at once bring forth the "full corn in the ear." We must "bring forth fruit with patience." Thus we are bidden to "grow in "grace" (2 St. Pet. iii. 18.); and to "grow up into Him in all things, "which is the Head, even Christ" (Eph. iv. 15.). But we must not forget that the parable teaches us, not only the duty of growth in grace and of cherishing and nurturing the up-springing blade as it grows, but also the inward power of life and growth which exists in the seed itself. This is a truth full of hope for the trembling beginner. He may think with comfort that God has planted that in his heart which will of itself grow and bear fruit, if he hinder it not by sin or sloth, and he may be confident that "He which hath begun a good work in" him, "will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. i. 6.).

It should be added that this parable is well fitted also to picture the outward growth of the Church universal in the world, but especially in its holiness and good works, and this meaning our Lord may have intended that it should convey in addition to the more personal view above given.

29. "He putteth in the sickle." Again our Lord would fix our minds on the corn reaped, and not on the reaper. For this part of the parable we may well study the fuller description of the great Harvest-day in the Parable of the "Tares" (St. Matt. xiii. 39—43.).

30 ¶ And He said, [n] Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it? A. D. 28.

n Acts 2. 41. & 4. 4. & 5. 14. & 19. 20.

31 *It is* like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth:

32 but when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it.

33 ¶ [o] And with many such parables spake He the word unto them, as they were able to hear *it*.

o John 16. 12.

34 But without a parable spake He not unto them: and when they were alone, He expounded all things to His disciples.

35 ¶ And the same day, when the even was come, He saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side.

30—32. The Mustard Seed.

St. Matt. xiii. 31, 32. St. Luke xiii. 18, 19.

30. "Whereunto" &c. This mode of introducing a lesson by a question to excite attention seems to have been common with Jewish teachers. It answers to the "Hearken," with which our Lord opens the Parable of the Sower (3.).

33, 34. Christ speaking in Parables.

St. Matt. xiii. 34, 35.

33. "As they were able to hear it." Measuring out to them the truths He taught them in proportion to the measure of care and profit with which they received them (See on 24.), and which made them "able to hear" more. The persons spoken of here were not the Apostles only, to whom He "expounded all things," when alone; but a larger number, consisting of all such as listened with some amount of attention and desire for instruction.

35—41. The Stilling of the Tempest.

St. Matt. viii. 23—27. St. Luke viii. 22—25.

35. "The same day." The same day, namely, on which our Lord had spoken so many parables (See *Note* on St. Matt. xiii. 53.).

"The other side." That is, opposite to the coast in the neighbourhood of Capernaum, where our Lord had been teaching. He wished to cross to the Eastern side of the lake to obtain rest and retirement, and probably also with a view to the healing of the demoniac of Gadara (See on v. 3.).

A.D. 28. 36 And when they had sent away the multitude, they took Him even as He was in the ship. And there were also with Him other little ships.

37 And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full.

38 And He was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake Him, and say unto Him, Master, carest Thou not that we perish?

39 And He arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.

40 And He said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?

41 And they feared exceedingly, and said one to

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36. "Even as He was." "That is, without any preparation or "refreshment" (*Alford*).

"Other little ships."—or boats. These probably contained people anxious to follow Jesus wherever He went, in order not to lose any of His teaching. We cannot doubt that these, as they shared the peril of the storm, would also be witnesses of the sudden and miraculous calm. So they who follow Christ over the waves of this troublesome world may often be in peril, but they need not fear, for He is not far off who "maketh the storm to cease, so that the waves thereof are still" (Ps. cvii. 29.).

37. "There arose a great storm." The Sea of Galilee is exposed to sudden and violent storms, which come down from the surrounding mountains, and cause danger to the small vessels employed upon the lake.

38. "In the hinder part of the ship," &c. St. Mark here gives us the fullest particulars of this calm and peaceful sleep in the midst of the raging of the storm and beating of the waves. Jesus was doubtless wearied with His labours, and for some time the disciples refrained from awaking Him.

39. "Peace, be still." The Lord of nature addresses the wind and the sea as His servants in tones of command. These majestic words of power are only given by St. Mark.

40. "How is it that ye have no faith?" That is, none sufficient to save you from so great fear. In St. Matthew it is, "O ye of *little* "faith" (On which see *Note*.). It was not the turning to Christ in their danger which showed want of faith; for that was a sign that they had *some* faith in His power. It was their extreme terror which called forth the rebuke for their weakness of faith. We may notice that this terror proved the reality of the danger (to human judgment), for the disciples had been brought up on the lake, and knew it well.

41. "They feared exceedingly." No longer at the dangers of the storm, but now at the presence of such an awful Being with them. With their as yet dim ideas of Christ's nature and powers, we can imagine with what a thrill of awe they must have seen Him rise up and speak to the wind and sea as though they were living creatures,

another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him? A.D. 28.

CHAPTER V.

1 *Christ delivering the possessed of the legion of devils,* 13 *they enter into the swine.* 25 *He healeth the woman of the bloody issue,* 35 *and raiseth from death Jairus his daughter.*

AND they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes.

2 And when He was come out of the ship, immediately there met Him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit,

3 who had *his* dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains:

4 because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any *man* tame him.

5 And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones.

6 But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped Him,

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and have witnessed their immediate obedience to His command. They would naturally have something of St. Peter's feeling when he witnessed the miraculous draught of fishes and exclaimed, "Depart from me; "for I am a sinful man, O Lord" (St. Luke v. 8.). It was terrible to be close to One who could exert such power, and to feel their own helplessness and sinfulness.

CHAPTER V.

1—20. The Healing of the Gadarene Demoniac.

St. Matt. viii. 28—34. St. Luke viii. 26—39.

1. "The country of the Gadarenes." At the South East corner of the Sea of Galilee (See *Map.*). St. Matthew has "Gergesenes" (on which see *Note.*).

2. "A man." Doubtless the best known and most conspicuous of the *two* named by St. Matthew, and also the spokesman.

3. "No man could bind him." That is, so as to keep him fast—no man could *effectually* bind him. The description here given of this demoniac is very frightful, and he must have been a terror to the whole neighbourhood. We can hardly doubt that it was in order to heal him that Jesus went to this particular spot. He had stilled the strife of the elements: He is now about to still a wilder and fiercer storm,—even that of human passions lashed into fury by the spirits of darkness.

6. "Worshipped Him." The evil spirits seem to have been compelled

A.D. 28. 7 and cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with Thee, Jesus, *Thou* Son of the most high God? I adjure Thee by God, that Thou torment me not.

8 For He said unto him, Come out of the man, *thou* unclean spirit.

9 And He asked him, What *is* thy name? And he answered, saying, My name *is* Legion: for we are many.

10 And he besought Him much that He would not send them away out of the country.

11 Now there was there nigh unto the mountains a great herd of swine feeding.

12 And all the devils besought Him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them.

13 And forthwith Jesus gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, (they were about two thousand;) and were choked in the sea.

14 And they that fed the swine fled, and told *it* in the city, and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that was done.

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to acknowledge Christ. They bore unwilling witness to His Divine power over them (See on i. 24.). The worship was not in reverence but in fear.

7. **"I adjure Thee by God."** The evil spirit even utters the holy Name of God in his struggle with his Conqueror,—a last cry of wrath and hatred before letting go his prey.

9. **"What is thy name?"** Our Lord asks this question, like many others, not for His own information, but for ours; and that those present might hear the evil spirits confess their presence, and so might perceive the reality and the greatness of the miracle.

"Legion." This word means a 'host' or 'army', being used for the largest division of the Roman army (See on St. Matt. xxvi. 53.). The name implies that it was not one evil spirit alone, but a vast company of evil spirits, which had taken possession of their unhappy victim. As there are mighty ranks and companies of blessed spirits, so are there of evil spirits. These are the "principalities and powers" against whom we "wrestle" (Eph. vi. 12.). We should compare with this miracle the casting out of "seven devils" from Mary Magdalene (See on St. Luke viii. 2.).

10. **"Out of the country."** This is explained by the words in St. Luke, "into the deep," which means 'into the bottomless pit.' They prayed not to be sent from the face of the earth into their own place—the place of darkness and of torment.

13. **"They were about two thousand."** The number is given by

15 And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid. A. D. 28.

16 And they that saw *it* told them how it befell to him that was possessed with the devil, and *also* concerning the swine.

17 And [a] they began to pray Him to depart out of their coasts. [a] Acts 16. 39.

18 And when He was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed Him that he might be with Him.

19 Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.

20 And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all *men* did marvel.

St. Mark alone. Some have supposed it may also show that the number of the unclean spirits was no less; but this can scarcely be pressed.

15. "**Sitting, and clothed,**" &c. St. Luke has "sitting at the feet "of Jesus," probably as a disciple, listening to His teaching. St. Luke tells us also that before his healing this demoniac "ware no clothes."

17. "**They began to pray Him to depart.**" "Miserable misguided "men! To have beheld their Saviour, and to have besought Him to "depart! Life had come to them—life and salvation,—and they thrust "them rudely away. Almost did they take up the very words of the "evil spirits, 'What have we to do with Thee, Jesus, Thou Son of "'God? Art Thou come to torment us?'" (*P. Young.*)

18. "**Prayed Him that he might be with Him.**" Probably in loving gratitude for the great mercy he had received. It has been thought that he may also have been afraid of the return of the evil spirits, if he lost Christ's protecting presence.

19. "**Jesus suffered him not.**" We cannot always tell where it will be best either for ourselves, or for others, that we should be. Many a one is led by zeal and ardour to seek some new place or calling in which to labour for Christ, when perhaps Christ has work enough for him to do at home. Observe the mercy of Jesus. Though the Gadarenes pray Him to depart, He will not leave them without a witness. He sends them a preacher to bring them to a better mind. The man so marvellously cured must go and make known the mercy shown him till his friends and neighbours learn to desire the blessings they have put from them (See on St. Matt. viii. 4.).

20. "**Began to publish**" &c. Thus he, who so lately uttered hideous cries which scared all who came near, now tells to wondering ears the blessed news of a Deliverer. Decapolis was the district adjoining Gadara (See *Note* on St. Matt. iv. 25.).

A. D. 28. 21 ¶ [b] And when Jesus was passed over again by
[b] Matt. 9. 1. ship unto the other side, much people gathered unto Him: and He was nigh unto the sea.

22 And, behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name; and when he saw Him, he fell at His feet,

23 and besought Him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death: *I pray Thee*, come and lay Thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live.

24 And *Jesus* went with him; and much people followed Him, and thronged Him.

21—43. The Miracles of the Raising of Jairus' daughter, and of the Healing of the woman with the issue of blood.

St. Matt. ix. 18—26. St. Luke viii. 40—56.

21. "Much people gathered unto Him." Probably His boat was seen approaching, and a crowd collected on the shore, which would be at or near Capernaum, whence He had set sail (iv. 35.), to welcome Him, and (like the poor woman of whom we are about to read) to seek healing for various infirmities. "They were all waiting for Him" (St. Luke.).

22. "One of the rulers of the synagogue." This may possibly have been one of the "elders of the Jews" sent by the Centurion to Jesus (St. Luke vii. 3.). At all events the whole of the events connected with that other miracle must have been well known to Jairus, and would greatly encourage him in going to Jesus. The "Rulers of "the synagogue" were men of some importance—probably always priests—who presided over, and had the chief management of, the synagogues in the various places. It was their duty to regulate the services, and to call upon any proper persons, duly qualified as Rabbis or teachers, to address the assembled congregation (See Acts xiii. 15.).

24. "Much people followed Him." They doubtless desired to see the miracle which they believed our Lord about to perform, when He yielded to Jairus' request that He would go with him.

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22. "*And, behold, there cometh.*" It is doubtful whether the coming of Jairus took place shortly after our Lord's landing, or not. St. Matthew inserts the healing of the paralytic, the calling and feast of St. Matthew, and conversations with the Pharisees and with "the disciples of "John," between the visit to Gadara and the coming of Jairus (See St. Matt. ix. 1—17.). But we must always recollect that it was not an object with the Evangelists to relate the events of the Gospel in their historical order. It appears however in the present case that the conversation with the disciples of the Baptist did at any rate occur at this time, for St. Matthew introduces the coming of Jairus by the words, "While He spake "these things" (St. Matt. ix. 18.), which seems to be meant to connect the last conversation closely with the coming of Jairus.

"*Jairus.*" This name is a word of three syllables, and should be pronounced Ja-i-rus, with the accent on the i.

25 And a certain woman, [c] which had an issue of blood twelve years, A.D. 28.

[c] Lev. 15. 25.

26 and had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse,

27 when she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched His garment.

28 For she said, If I may touch but His clothes, I shall be whole.

29 And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in *her* body that she was healed of that plague.

30 And Jesus, immediately knowing in Himself that [d] virtue had gone out of Him, turned Him about in the press, and said, Who touched My clothes?

[d] Luke 6. 19.

31 And His disciples said unto Him, Thou seest the multitude thronging Thee, and sayest Thou, Who touched Me?

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28. "If I may touch but His clothes," &c. Our Lord Himself commends this poor woman's faith. Therefore we are sure that it was a true and lively faith, and a faith which saw in Christ One mighty to save. It is sometimes said that she had a faith which bordered on superstition, and that she looked to be cured by the touch of Christ's clothes as by magic or a charm, and especially that she sought to touch the "hem" of His garment as the most sacred part (See on St. Matt. xxiii. 5.) and so possessing special virtue. No doubt this woman's faith may have been imperfect; but all this crying down of it as though it were mere superstition is quite contrary to our Lord's view of it, when He said, "Thy faith hath saved thee"; and He could measure her faith, we cannot.

30. "Knowing in Himself that virtue" &c. By "virtue" is meant 'healing power.' We must not suppose that our Lord had healed the afflicted woman without His own will and intention, and that He only became conscious of it by the feeling that He had healed some one. This would be to ascribe to our Lord's clothes the very magical power which some fancy the woman did. No doubt He was not only aware of her approach, but knowing her faith to be real, willed that the healing should take place. But, as He did not *see* the woman's touch, it is said that He knew in Himself that the miracle was performed.

"Who touched My clothes?" Jesus needed not to ask; but He would draw forth the woman that all present might be witnesses of the miracle, and that He might speak words of comfort and encouragement to her (See on the question in 9.).

31. "His disciples said." Chiefly St. Peter (St. Luke) as their spokesman. They were much surprised at our Lord's question, for, walking as He was in the middle of a dense crowd pressing round Him, He must have been touched by numbers.

A.D. 28. 32 And He looked round about to see her that had done this thing.

33 But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before Him, and told Him all the truth.

e ch. 10. 52. Acts 14. 9. 34 And He said unto her, Daughter, e thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.

35 While He yet spake, there came from the ruler of the synagogue's *house certain* which said, Thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the Master any further?

36 As soon as Jesus heard 'the word that was spoken, He saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe.

37 And He suffered no man to follow Him, save Peter, and James, and John the brother of James.

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32. "He looked round about to see" &c. And also that she might see Him, and finding His Eye upon her might not be hid.

33. "Fearing and trembling." Partly at the being called forth in public, when she had shrunk so much from the gaze of the crowd, coming secretly and behind to touch the hem of Christ's garment; partly also, no doubt, at the presence of One so mighty, before whose gaze she could not remain any longer hid.

34. Thy faith hath made thee whole." "Our Lord says not, "'The hem of My garment.' Nay, the soldiers divided all His gar-"ments among them, yet received no blessing. Her *Faith* had made "her whole; and why? Because it had brought her to Christ" (*Burgon's Plain Commentary.*).

"Go in peace." This is literally, 'Go *into* peace'—'Depart,' that is, 'to a blessed enjoyment of the peace which I give unto thee'—a peace which passeth understanding.

"Be whole of thy plague." She was already whole; so these words are partly a confirmation of the cure which had been silently and secretly bestowed, and partly a pledge that her infirmity should not return to her.

35. "Why troublest thou the Master any further?" These persons, who had hoped so long as life remained, now thought the time for hope was past. They had believed that Jesus could perchance heal the sick, but that He could raise the dead was beyond their belief. Compare the thoughts of the sisters of Bethany (St. John xi. 21 and 32.).

36. "As soon as Jesus heard" &c. The delay caused by the healing of the woman must have been a sore trial to the anxious heart of the father; and now this message would cause him still more dread. But before there was time for him to realize the sad news, or to answer the words of the messengers, Jesus in His mercy comforts and assures him. He will not "quench the smoking flax" (See on St. Matt. xii. 20.), nor let the trembling faith expire.

37. "Peter, and James, and John." The same three who were the

38 And He cometh to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and seeth the tumult, and them that wept and wailed greatly. A.D. 23.

39 And when He was come in, He saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but [f] sleepeth. [f] John 11. 11.

40 And they laughed Him to scorn. [g] But when He had put them all out, He taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with Him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying. [g] Acts 9. 40.

41 And He took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise.

42 And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she was *of the age* of twelve years. And they were astonished with a great astonishment.

43 And [h] He charged them straitly that no man should know it; and commanded that something should be given her to eat. [h] Matt. 8. 4. & 9. 30. & 12. 16. & 17. 9. ch. 3. 12. Luke 5. 14.

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chosen witnesses of the Transfiguration (See on St. Matt. xvii. 1.), and of the Agony in the garden (St. Matt. xxv. 37.). "To follow Him" means 'to follow Him into the house.'

41. "Talitha cumi." The actual words spoken by our Lord (as in vii. 34.). We may well believe that the solemn utterance of such a moment would fix itself in the memory of all who heard it, and that St. Mark is here repeating the story as he had often heard it from the lips of St. Peter (See Introduction to St. Mark.).

"Damsel, I say unto thee, arise." The words are simply, 'Damsel, 'arise.' "The word "Talitha" is a word of affection and endearment, "answering to our 'My child'" (*Alford.*).

42. "Arose, and walked." So, says the venerable Bede, a soul, quickened by Divine grace not only arises from the death of sin, but walks in newness of life.

43. "He charged them straitly" &c. Probably whilst He remained in the town, in order to avoid the thronging of the people (See on St. Matt. viii. 4.).

"Commanded that something" &c. With a thoughtful care for the weakness of the girl, and to prove the reality of the miracle and completeness of the restoration. So does Jesus not only quicken the dead soul to new life, but also cares for its support and sustenance, commanding that it should be fed with the heavenly food of His own Flesh and Blood, to its perpetual strengthening and refreshing.

A. D. 28.

CHAPTER VI.

1 Christ is contemned of His countrymen. 7 He giveth the twelve power over unclean spirits. 14 Divers opinions of Christ. 27 John Baptist is beheaded, 29 and buried. 30 The apostles return from preaching. 34 The miracle of five loaves and two fishes. 48 Christ walketh on the sea: 53 and healeth all that touch Him.

AND He went out from thence, and came into His own country; and His disciples follow Him.

2 And when the sabbath day was come, He began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing *Him* were astonished, saying, [a] From whence hath this *Man* these things? and what wisdom *is* this which is given unto Him, that even such mighty works are wrought by His hands?

3 Is not this the Carpenter, the Son of Mary, [b] the Brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not His sisters here with us? And they [c] were offended at Him.

4 But Jesus said unto them, [d] A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house.

5 [e] And He could there do no mighty work, save that He laid His hands upon a few sick folk, and healed *them*.

6 And [f] He marvelled because of their unbelief.

[a] John 6. 42.
[b] See Matt. 12. 46. Gal. 1. 19.
[c] Matt. 11. 6.
[d] John 4. 44.
[e] See Gen. 19. 22. & 32. 25. ch. 9. 23.
[f] Isai. 59. 16.

1—6. Our Lord's teaching and rejection at Nazareth.

St. Matt. xiii. 53—58., and compare St. Luke iv. 14—32.

3. "The Carpenter." No where else is our Lord called "the "Carpenter." It has from the earliest times been thought that we may gather from this expression that Jesus had actually worked at the trade of Joseph, His supposed father. Joseph, there is little doubt, was before this time dead.

5. "He could there do no mighty work." "Not because He was "powerless, but because they were faithless." The best comment on these words is given us by our Lord Himself in His answer to the father of the lunatic child, who said, "If Thou canst do any thing, have "compassion on us, and help us." Christ answers this "*If Thou canst "do any thing*" with "*If thou canst believe*"; adding, "All things are "possible to him that believeth" (ix. 22, 23.). This was, and still is, the law of Christ's blessings. He gives them to those who have faith to receive them (But see on St. John xii. 37.).

6. "He marvelled." For He was very Man, accepting our human nature in all things, sin only excepted (See on St. Luke viii. 46.).

1—6. This occurrence is probably a second one of a like character, the earlier being recorded by St. Luke. See *Notes* on St. Matt. xiii. 54. and St. Luke iv. 16.

[g] And He went round about the villages, teaching. A.D. 28.

g Matt. 9. 35. Luke 13. 22.

7 ¶ [h] And He called *unto Him* the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits;

h ch. 3. 13, 14.

8 and commanded them that they should take nothing for *their* journey, save a staff only; no scrip, no bread, no [2] money in *their* purse:

9 but [i] *be* shod with sandals; and not put on two coats.

10 [k] And He said unto them, In what place soever ye enter into an house, there abide till ye depart from that place.

11 [l] And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, [m] shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom [3] and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city.

12 And they went out, and preached that men should repent.

2 The word signifieth *a piece of brass money, in value somewhat less than a farthing,* but here it is taken in general for *money.*

i Acts 12. 8.

k Luke 10. 7, 8.

l Luke 10. 10.

m Acts 13. 51. & 18. 6.

3 Gr. *or.*

"He went about the villages, teaching." How much is summed up in these few words:—what treasures of doctrine; what loving invitations; what awakening warnings; what miracles of mercy! Well may St. John end his Gospel by saying, "There are also many other "things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, "I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that "should be written."

7—13. The sending forth of the Twelve Apostles.

St. Matt. x. 1—15. St. Luke ix. 1—5.

7. "By two and two." This is named only by St. Mark. In St. Matthew's Gospel the twelve are named in pairs, and probably as they went forth.

8. "Save a staff only." Such as some of them probably had already in their hands. Even this they were not to "provide" (See on St. Matt. x. 9., and we must give this same sense to St. Luke ix. 3., where the Apostles are told not to take staves). The stick for support was a matter of little moment. If they had it, they might use it. If not, they were to go without, for God would keep them from weariness as He did His people in the wilderness (See Deut. viii. 4.). Our Lord would have His Apostles not only free from all earthly cares, and trusting all to God, but also a pattern of self-denial and simplicity of living, that so they might the better persuade men to renounce the world and seek the true riches.

9. "Sandals." These were only leathern soles, bound on to the foot with thongs (See on St. Luke iii. 16.).

A. D. 29. 33rd Year of our Lord's life.

13 And they cast out many devils, [n] and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed *them*.

[n] James 5. 14.

14 ¶ And king Herod heard *of Him;* (for His name was spread abroad:) and he said, That John the Baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in him.

[o] Matt. 16. 14. ch. 8. 28.

15 [o] Others said, That it is Elias. And others said, That it is a prophet, or as one of the prophets.

[p] Luke 3. 19.

16 [p] But when Herod heard *thereof*, he said, It is John, whom I beheaded: he is risen from the dead.

A. D. 30.

17 For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife: for he had married her.

[q] Lev. 18. 16. & 20. 21.

18 For John had said unto Herod, [q] It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife.

[2] Or, *an inward grudge.*

19 Therefore Herodias had [2] a quarrel against him, and would have killed him; but she could not:

[r] Matt. 21. 26.

20 for Herod [r] feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy, and [3] observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.

[3] Or, *kept him*, or, *saved him.*

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13. "Anointed with oil." This was the outward sign and form with which the miraculous gift of healing was accompanied (See on St. James v. 14.). The miraculous gift having ceased, our Church has wisely discontinued its outward sign.

14—29. Herod, and the death of St. John the Baptist.

St. Matt. xiv. 1—12. St. Luke ix. 7—9.

15. "Elias." That is, Elijah, whom many of the Jews expected to reappear on earth (See on St. Matt. xvii. 10, 11.).

"A prophet, or as one of the prophets." The word "or" is not in the Greek, and the meaning is, 'a prophet like one of the old prophets.' Others seem to have thought that Jesus was actually "one of the old "prophets risen again" (St. Luke.).

19. "Herodias had a quarrel" &c. Like Jezebel, this wicked woman was more daring in her wickedness than the partner of her guilt. She tried to induce Herod to destroy him whom she looked upon as her enemy, but as yet had tried in vain.

20. "Observed him." There is little doubt that this is an error of translation, and that it should be 'kept him in safe custody'; thus, while inflicting punishment upon him for his bold reproof, at the same time guarding him against the murderous designs of Herodias.

"He did many things." How many are like Herod. They will do many things—fulfil many duties, give up many sins,—and they will hear gladly words of holy counsel: but all the while one cherished sin remains.

21 And when a convenient day was come, that Herod [s] on his birthday made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief *estates* of Galilee; A.D. 29. [s] Gen. 40. 20.

22 and when the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced, and pleased Herod and them that sat with him, the king said unto the damsel, Ask ~~of~~ me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give *it* thee.

23 And he sware unto her, [t] Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give *it* thee, unto the half of my kingdom. [t] Esth. 5. 3, 6. & 7. 2.

24 And she went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist.

25 And she came in straightway with haste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou give me by and by in a charger the head of John the Baptist.

26 And the king was exceeding sorry; *yet* for his oath's sake, and for their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her.

27 And immediately the king sent [2] an executioner, and commanded his head to be brought: and he went and beheaded him in the prison, [2] Or, *one of his guard.*

28 and brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel: and the damsel gave it to her mother.

29 And when his disciples heard *of it*, they came and took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb.

30 ¶ And the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and told Him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught.

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21. "A convenient day." "Convenient" for the designs of Herodias.

23. "Unto the half of my kingdom." This was perhaps a form not unusual with kings and princes in offering to grant some great favour (See Esther vii. 2.). It need not be understood literally, but as implying a readiness to grant the highest favour likely to be asked.

30—44. The Feeding of the Five Thousand.

St. Matt. xiv. 13—21. St. Luke ix. 10—17. St. John vi. 1—13.

30. "Told Him all things." This was after their first missionary tour to the towns and villages around, in which they went without Jesus, and, as we have seen, "by two and two" (7.).

A.D. 29.

31 And He said unto them, Come ye yourselves
u ch. 3. 20. apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for
u there were many coming and going, and they had
no leisure so much as to eat.

32 And they departed into a desert place by ship
privately.

33 And the people saw them departing, and many
knew Him, and ran afoot thither out of all cities,
and outwent them, and came together unto Him.

x Matt. 9. 36. 34 x And Jesus, when He came out, saw much
people, and was moved with compassion toward
them, because they were as sheep not having a
shepherd: and He began to teach them many things.

35 And when the day was now far spent, His
disciples came unto Him, and said, This is a desert
place, and now the time *is* far passed:

36 send them away, that they may go into the
country round about, and into the villages, and buy
y Num. 11. 13, 22. 2 Kin. 4. 43. themselves bread: for they have nothing to eat.

2 The Roman penny is seven pence halfpenny; as Matt. 18. 28. 37 He answered and said unto them, Give ye
them to eat. And they say unto Him, y Shall we go
and buy two hundred 2 pennyworth of bread, and
give them to eat?

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31. "**Rest a while.**" So thoughtful is Christ for those who have laboured for Him. Blessed are they who, when their day of labour is over, hear the Master they have served saying to them, 'Come apart, 'and rest a while;—rest till I come and take you home for ever.' It may be (See on St. Matt.) that Jesus Himself longed for a little space of quiet in His sorrow for the martyrdom of St. John the Baptist.

"**They had no leisure**" &c. Christ sacrificed His life, not alone upon the Cross, but in the toils and privations of every day (See iii. 20, 21.).

33. "**Many knew Him, and ran**" &c. They could easily see which way the boat was going from the shore, as the lake is not broad (See on St. Matt. iv. 18.).

34. "**When He came out.**" This is the same as "went forth" in St. Matthew, and probably means 'landed from the boat.'

"**As sheep not having a shepherd.**" So the multitudes had seemed to the Good Shepherd before He sent forth the Apostles (St. Matt. ix. 36.). And He cannot see them thus, and not tend them. "The "Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep" (St. John x. 11.); and weary and fasting though He was, "He began to teach them many "things."

37. "**Give ye them to eat.**" Christ knew what He was about to do, but He would first show His disciples their great need and their entire helplessness. They must learn to look to Him for all things.

"**Two hundred pennyworth.**" The Roman penny, used by the

38 He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see. And when they knew, they say, [z] Five, and two fishes. A.D. 29.

[z] See Matt. 15. 34. ch. 8. 5.

39 And He commanded them to make all sit down by companies upon the green grass.

40 And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties.

41 And when He had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, He looked up to heaven, [a] and blessed, and brake the loaves, and gave *them* to His disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided He among them all.

[a] 1 Sam. 9. 13. Matt. 26. 26.

42 And they did all eat, and were filled.

43 And they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments, and of the fishes.

44 And they that did eat of the loaves were about five thousand men.

45 ¶ And straightway He constrained His disciples to get into the ship, and to go to the other side before [2] unto Bethsaida, while He sent away the people.

[2] Or, *over against Bethsaida.*

Jews, was worth sevenpence halfpenny of our money, but, beyond this, all things were much cheaper, so that money went much farther then than with us now, the penny being the amount of an ordinary day's wages (See on St. Matt. xx. 2.). We may then suppose the quantity of bread which could be bought for two hundred pence about what could in this land now be bought for two hundred days' wages.

39. "By companies." Divided into hundreds and fifties, so that the disciples could the more readily pass among them to distribute the food, and so that they could easily be counted.

44. "Five thousand men." This, as we know from St. Matthew, was "beside women and children."

45—56. The walking on the Sea, and the visit to Gennesaret.

St. Matt. xiv. 22—36. St. John vi. 16—21.

45. "Bethsaida." This plainly is the well-known Bethsaida, the birthplace of the chief Apostles, near Capernaum. The miracle had been performed near another Bethsaida on the other side of the lake (See on St. Luke ix. 10.).

A.D. 29. 46 And when He had sent them away, He departed into a mountain to pray.

47 And when even was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and He alone on the land.

48 And He saw them toiling in rowing; for the wind was contrary unto them: and about the fourth watch of the night He cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, and [b] would have passed by them.

[b] See Luke 24. 28.

49 But when they saw Him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out:

50 for they all saw Him, and were troubled. And immediately He talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid.

51 And He went up unto them into the ship; and the wind ceased: and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered.

[c] ch. 8. 17, 18. 52 For [c] they considered not *the miracle* of the loaves: for their [d] heart was hardened.

[d] ch. 3. 5. & 16. 14.

53 And when they had passed over, they came into the land of Gennesaret, and drew to the shore.

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48. "He saw them." From His lonely mountain. He sees always with a loving watchful Eye the toils and perils of His servants, looking down from the Throne where He is ever pleading for them.

"Would have passed by them." So with the two disciples at Emmaus "He made as though He would have gone further" (St. Luke xxiv. 28.), but they constrained Him, and He stayed with them. And now He seemed to be passing by, but when they knew Him, they "willingly received Him into their ship" (St. John.). He ever abides with those who are willing to receive Him.

51. "He went up" &c. Immediately before this St. Matthew relates St. Peter's walking on the water to Christ. It is very remarkable that St. Mark, supposed to draw his history from the very lips of St. Peter (See Introduction), should omit this part of the history here. Perhaps the Apostle might withhold it from a modesty which would not record so wonderful a miracle of himself. The sacred writers never pass over any matter because it tells *against* themselves, and so we might expect St. Peter's failure of faith to be told here; but we are perhaps apt to think much of that failure, and to forget the wonderful faith which enabled him to walk for a time upon the water.

52. "They considered not" &c. They did not reflect upon it so as to gather from it our Lord's power over all creation, and therefore the sudden calm filled them with amazement.

"Their heart was hardened." Not wilfully and wickedly, but through weakness and dulness of perception. There is no more striking proof that God ordinarily trains His children for heaven by slow degrees and gradual growth than the case of the Apostles themselves. They arrive stage by stage at the knowledge of Divine things, and are led on from strength to strength.

54 And when they were come out of the ship, straightway they knew Him, A.D. 29.

55 and ran through that whole region round about, and began to carry about in beds those that were sick, where they heard He was.

56 And whithersoever He entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought Him that [e] they might touch if it were but the border of His garment: and as many as touched [2] Him were made whole.

[e] Matt. 9. 20. ch. 5. 27, 28. Acts 19. 12.
[2] Or, *it.*

CHAPTER VII.

1 *The Pharisees find fault at the disciples for eating with unwashen hands.* 8 *They break the commandment of God by the traditions of men.* 14 *Meat defileth not the man.* 24 *He healeth the Syrophenician woman's daughter of an unclean spirit,* 31 *and one that was deaf, and stammered in his speech.*

THEN came together unto Him the Pharisees, and certain of the scribes, which came from Jerusalem.

2 And when they saw some of His disciples eat bread with [3] defiled, that is to say, with unwashen, hands, they found fault.

[3] Or, *common.*

3 For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash *their* hands [4] oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders.

[4] Or, *diligently:* in the original, *with the fist:* Theophylact, *up to the elbow.*

4 And *when they come* from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, *as* the washing of cups, and [5] pots, brasen vessels, and of [6] tables.

[5] Sextarius is about a pint and an half.
[6] Or, *beds.*

5 Then the Pharisees and scribes asked Him, Why

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54. **"They knew Him."** That is, the "men of that place" (St. Matt.).

56. **"As many as touched Him" &c.** Of such the woman with the issue of blood is but a sample (See on St. Luke viii. 47.).

CHAPTER VII.

1—13. Eating with unwashen hands, and the Fifth Commandment.

St. Matt. xv. 1—9.

3. **"For the Pharisees" &c.** Observe, St. Mark, writing for Gentile readers, gives a full account of the various ceremonies which the Jews observed as to washing. The word translated "oft" may also mean 'diligently', or 'sedulously' (See *Margin.*).

A.D. 29. walk not Thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands?

6 He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, **This people honoureth Me with *their* lips, but their heart is far from Me.**

7 **Howbeit in vain do they worship Me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men.**

Isai. 29. 13.

8 For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, *as* the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do.

2 Or, *frustrate.* 9 And He said unto them, Full well ye [2] reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.

[a] Deut. 5. 16. 10 For Moses said, [a] **Honour thy father and thy**

[b] Lev. 20. 9. Prov. 20. 20. **mother**; and, [b] **Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death:**

Ex. 20. 12. & 21. 17.

11 but ye say, If a man shall say to his father

[c] Matt. 23. 18. or mother, *It is* [c] Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; *he shall be free.*

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6. "**This people honoureth**" &c. "To honour God with the lips, "while the heart is far from Him, seems to be the great peril of all who "inhabit a Christian land; especially if they happen to live in an age "when Religion is (so to speak) a *fashionable* thing" (*Burgon.*).

9. "**Full well.**" This is spoken in what is called *irony*, which is a very common form of speech, in which we use words not meant to be taken literally, but to be understood in an opposite sense. When Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, "Cry aloud, for he is a god: either he is "talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he "sleepeth, and must be awaked" (1 Kings xviii. 27.), he was speaking in *irony*. So the word "gracious" is spoken in *irony*, when Jeremiah says, "O inhabitant of Lebanon, that makest thy nest in the cedars, how "gracious shalt thou be when pangs come upon thee, the pain as of a "woman in travail!" (Jer. xxii. 23.). In this place "Full well" has the force of 'How miserably.'

11. "**Corban.**" That is, an offering—something dedicated to God. It is to be remarked here that the Saviour counts *supporting* our parents as the same thing as *honouring* them. Thus does our Catechism rightly interpret the fifth Commandment as meaning to "succour"—as well as to "love" and "honour"—our father and mother. St. Paul's words are very strong; he is speaking of widows not being supported by the church, if they have children or relations who can support them, and says, "If any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his "own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel" (1 Tim. v. 8.).

12 And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother; A.D. 29.

13 making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.

14 ¶ And when He had called all the people *unto Him*, He said unto them, Hearken unto Me every one *of you*, and understand:

15 There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man.

16 [d] If any man have ears to hear, let him hear. [d] Matt. 11. 15.

17 And when He was entered into the house from the people, His disciples asked Him concerning the parable.

18 And He saith unto them, Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, *it* cannot defile him;

19 because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats?

20 And He said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man.

21 [e] For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, [e] Gen. 6. 5. & 8. 21.

22 thefts, [2] covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasci- [2] Gr. *covetousnesses, wickednesses.*

14—23. Defilement.

St. Matt. xv. 10—20.

19. "Draught." A sewer or drain (See the use of the word in 2 Kings x. 27.).

"Purging all meats." That is, cleansing the food eaten from all that is not suitable for nourishment.

22. "Wickedness." This means 'spite' or 'malice.'

"Lasciviousness." Impurity and unchastity of all sorts, in thought word and deed. The gross and deadly sins, which are the chief of this class, are named at the beginning of the list. Our Lord teaches us that every least sin of this class is a breach of the seventh commandment (St. Matt. v. 27, 28.).

A.D. 29. viousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness:

23 all these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

24 ¶ And from thence He arose, and went into the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and entered into an house, and would have no man know *it*: but He could not be hid.

25 For a *certain* woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of Him, and came and fell at His feet:

[2] Or, *Gentile.*

26 the woman was a [2] Greek, a Syrophenician by nation; and she besought Him that He would cast forth the devil out of her daughter.

27 But Jesus said unto her, Let the children first be filled: for it is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast *it* unto the dogs.

28 And she answered and said unto Him, Yes, Lord: yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs.

29 And He said unto her, For this saying go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy daughter.

30 And when she was come to her house, she found the devil gone out, and her daughter laid upon the bed.

"**An evil eye.**" Envy or jealousy, which come from looking in a bad spirit upon the blessings of others (See St. Matt. xx. 15.).

"**Blasphemy.**" Anything spoken against, or to the dishonour of, God.

"**Foolishness.**" Lightness and vanity.

24—30. The Syrophenician Woman.

St. Matt. xv. 21—28.

24. "Would have no man know it." Doubtless Jesus sought for rest and retirement, His blessed Human Frame being wearied out with His constant labours of Mind and Body (See on iii. 20.).

26. "A Greek, a Syrophenician by nation." By "a Greek" is only meant a Gentile, the Jews frequently speaking of all foreign nations as Greeks, because the Greeks were the most important of those with whom they had any dealings. A Syrophenician signifies an inhabitant of that part of Syria lying on the coast, which was in ancient times inhabited by the Phœnicians, and of which Tyre and Sidon were principal cities.

30. "Laid upon the bed." One of those minute particulars which St. Mark is so fond of giving.

31 ¶ [f]And again, departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, He came unto the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis. A. D. 29. [f] Matt. 15. 29.

32 And [g]they bring unto Him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech; and they beseech Him to put His hand upon him. [g] Matt. 9. 32. Luke 11. 14.

33 And He took him aside from the multitude, and put His fingers into his ears, and [h]He spit, and touched his tongue; [h] ch. 8. 23. John 9. 6.

34 and [i]looking up to heaven, [k]He sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened. [i] ch. 6. 41. John 11. 41. & 17. 1. [k] John 11. 33, 38.

31—37. Healing of a deaf and dumb man.

31. "Through the midst" &c. Our Lord then must have crossed the Jordan North of the Sea of Galilee, for Decapolis lay on the farther, or Eastern, side of the lake (See on St. Matt. iv. 25. and Map.). This same journey is briefly named by St. Matthew (xv. 29.), who also mentions that a great number of miracles of healing were performed at this time, one of which St. Mark here singles out and relates.

32. "One that was deaf," &c. Upon the state of this poor sufferer we may observe, 1. that he suffered from natural causes, there being no mention here of any evil spirit: 2. that possibly he was not perfectly deaf and dumb, the words rather leading to the idea that he was afflicted with excessive deafness, together with an infirmity of speech. When a person is deaf and dumb (in the ordinary sense) the dumbness is almost always the simple result of the deafness, and not the result of any defect in the organs of speech. The person who has no sense of hearing cannot sound words rightly because he does not know how they sound. This would not be called "an impediment in his speech."

33. "He took him aside." As with the blind man afterwards (viii. 23.). "His purpose was that, apart from the din and tumult and inter-"ruption of the crowd, in solitude and silence, the man might be the "better able to receive deep and lasting impressions: even as the same "Lord does now oftentimes lead a soul apart, sets it in the solitude of a "sick chamber, or in loneliness of spirit, or takes away from it earthly "companions and friends, when he would speak with it and heal it" (*Trench.*).

"Put His fingers" &c. Our Lord heals with various outward signs, doubtless, though we may not be able to trace it, with special regard to each particular case, so as to produce the deepest and most lasting effect, or to draw out the faith of the sufferer. In the present case our Lord's actions were speaking signs to one deprived of hearing; and would teach him to see how great power dwelt in that sacred Body, the least touch of which was so full of healing "virtue" (v. 30. See also on St. John ix. 6.).

34. "He sighed." At the sight of such suffering; suffering being always a witness of the fruit of sin in the world, and always drawing forth the tender sympathy of Him who suffered Himself that He might rescue a world from suffering. So too Jesus groaned in Himself by the grave of Lazarus (St. John xi. 38.).

"Ephphatha." St. Mark delights to give the very words spoken by

A. D. 29.

35 [l] And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain.

[l] Isai. 35. 5, 6. Matt. 11. 5.

36 And [m] He charged them that they should tell no man: but the more He charged them, so much the more a great deal they published *it;*

[m] ch. 5. 43.

37 and were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well: He maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.

CHAPTER VIII.

1 *Christ feedeth the people miraculously:* 10 *refuseth to give a sign to the Pharisees:* 14 *admonisheth His disciples to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod:* 22 *giveth a blind man his sight:* 27 *acknowledgeth that He is the Christ, who should suffer and rise again:* 34 *and exhorteth to patience in persecution for the profession of the gospel.*

IN those days the multitude being very great, and having nothing to eat, Jesus called His disciples *unto Him*, and saith unto them,

2 I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now been with Me three days, and have nothing to eat:

3 and if I send them away fasting to their own houses, they will faint by the way: for divers of them came from far.

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our Lord, though, as he writes for Gentile readers, he takes care to give the interpretation of them (So "Talitha cumi", v. 41.). Blessed are they to whom Christ speaks His "Ephphatha" now,—whose ears are opened to hear His words, and whose tongues are loosed to sing His praises!

36. "He charged them" &c. Doubtless, as in other cases, to avoid the thronging of the curious and idle (See on i. 45. and St. Matt. viii. 4.).

CHAPTER VIII.

1—10. Feeding of the Four Thousand.

St. Matt. xv. 29—39. Compare on the Feeding of the Five Thousand, St. John vi. 1—14.

2. "I have compassion" &c. How comforting to know that Jesus feels compassion for human wants and weakness! His compassion is not lessened because He now sitteth on the Right Hand of God.

"Three days." May not this imply an earnest craving in some at least of this great multitude for spiritual food, so that in their eagerness to feed their souls they forgot their bodily needs? But Jesus did not forget. They sought first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and that which was needful for the body was added unto them.

4 And His disciples answered Him, From whence can a man satisfy these *men* with bread here in the wilderness? A.D. 29.

5 [a]And He asked them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven. [a] See ch. 6. 38.

6 And He commanded the people to sit down on the ground: and He took the seven loaves, and gave thanks, and brake, and gave to His disciples to set before *them;* and they did set *them* before the people.

7 And they had a few small fishes: and [b]He blessed, and commanded to set them also before *them.* [b] Matt. 14. 19. ch. 6. 41.

8 So they did eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken *meat* that was left seven baskets.

9 And they that had eaten were about four thousand: and He sent them away.

10 And straightway He entered into a ship with His disciples, and came into the parts of Dalmanutha.

11 ¶ [c]And the Pharisees came forth, and began to question with Him, seeking of Him a sign from heaven, tempting Him. [c] Matt. 12. 38. John 6. 30.

12 And He sighed deeply in His spirit, and saith,

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4. "**From whence**" &c. Although some excuse may be found for this question (See on St. Matt.), yet it certainly shows a slowness and dulness of faith, the circumstances being so like those of the former miracle of the Feeding of the Five Thousand. We may remark here (as on St. Matt. xvi. 8.) how marvellous, and how unlike the character of any other writers, is the perfect openness of the Evangelists in recording everything which tells against the Apostles. What stronger proof could we wish for of their thorough truthfulness?

6. "**Gave thanks.**" This is recorded in both the miracles, a lesson surely to all. If the Son of God did not break the bread without thanksgiving, how much less should we!

10. "**Dalmanutha.**" Supposed to be a village near Magdala, which St. Matthew here names. There are some ruins of an ancient village near Gennesaret, which are probably those of Dalmanutha.

11—13. The Pharisees and the Sadducees ask for a sign from heaven.

St. Matt. xvi. 1—4. Compare St. Matt. xii. 38—40.

12. "**He sighed deeply in His spirit.**" No doubt grieved at the hardness of heart and hypocrisy of His questioners. How hateful must

A. D. 29. Why doth this generation seek after a sign? verily I say unto you, There shall no sign be given unto this generation.

13 And He left them, and entering into the ship again departed to the other side.

14 ¶ Now *the disciples* had forgotten to take bread, neither had they in the ship with them more than one loaf.

d Luke 12. 1. 15 [d] And He charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and *of* the leaven of Herod.

16 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, *It is* because we have no bread.

17 And when Jesus knew *it*, He saith unto them, e ch. 6. 52. Why reason ye, because ye have no bread? [e] perceive ye not yet, neither understand? have ye your heart yet hardened?

18 Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember?

f Matt. 14. 20. ch. 6. 43. Luke 9. 17. John 6. 13. 19 [f] When I brake the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? They say unto him, Twelve.

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the sight of sin have ever been to the spotless One! Surely it was one of His deep sorrows to behold all around Him ungodliness and wrong.

"No sign." None, that is, such as they asked for "from heaven,"—no sign beyond what they already possessed, such as that of the prophet Jonah. They had in reality signs enough, if they would discern them.

14—21. Warning against the Pharisees and Herod.

St. Matt. xvi. 5—12.

15. "The leaven of Herod." This would mean the taint of Herod's worldliness and unbelief. That Herod and his court were not likely to influence any one for good we may easily gather from the story of the death of St. John the Baptist (See vi. 21, 22.). Instead of the leaven of Herod, St. Matthew adds the Sadducees. Possibly each Evangelist only gives the outline of a much longer discourse, in which our Lord may have warned His disciples against all three—the Pharisees the Sadducees, and Herod. Or Herod, though probably not a Sadducee by profession, may have shewn so much of the worldly unbelief of that sect as to have been joined with it in our Lord's warning.

19. "How many baskets" &c. Christ speaks of the fragments because the amazing quantity of these showed better than anything else the vastness of the miracles. 'It is astonishing,' He would imply, 'that 'ye, who saw what the very crumbs and leavings of My bounty were,

20 And [g] when the seven among four thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? And they said, Seven. A.D. 29. [g] ver. 8. Matt. 15. 37.

21 And He said unto them, How is it that [h] ye do not understand? [h] ver. 17. ch. 6. 52.

22 ¶ And He cometh to Bethsaida; and they bring a blind man unto Him, and besought Him to touch him.

23 And He took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town; and when [i] He had spit on his eyes, and put His hands upon him, He asked him if he saw ought. [i] ch. 7. 33.

24 And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees, walking.

'should suppose that I am now caring about the smallness of your 'provision of bread.'

21. "How is it that ye do not understand?" There were two things which the disciples failed to understand:—1. that Jesus was speaking to them in a parable, of spiritual leaven, not of real: and 2. that, even had they been in want of food, they need not have been disquieted, as they should have trusted Him to provide.

22—26. Healing of the blind man at Bethsaida.

22. "Bethsaida." The place of that name at the North-East corner of the Sea of Galilee;—not the better known birthplace of the first-called Apostles (See on St. Luke ix. 10.).

"They bring." This blind man does not himself cry to Jesus for help. He is brought to Him. Perhaps He had no clear knowledge of, or firm faith in, Christ as yet, and this may account for the gradual way in which the cure was performed.

23. "Led him out." Just as He took the deaf man "aside from "the multitude," when He healed him, using in that case the same outward application as in this (See on vii. 33.). How beautiful is this picture of Jesus leading the blind man out of the town by the hand. So does He, who is the Light of the world, by the merciful dealings of His providence lead many a one blind in spirit aside from the noise and care and distraction of the world, that He may bestow upon him spiritual sight, and teach him to see the things which are not seen. He anoints our eyes with eye-salve that we may see (See Rev. iii. 18.).

"Asked him if he saw." That the man might declare to those permitted to witness this miracle (for there were some so permitted, as we find from the next verse,) the progress of his recovery.

24. "I see men as trees, walking." Probably this man, not having been born blind, had a recollection of the appearance of various objects, and now, looking upon the by-standers, saw the forms of men, only so indistinctly that he could not tell them from trees, except by their motion. Objects close to us always look much larger when seen dimly and indistinctly, because such dimness makes them appear to be farther

A. D. 29. 25 After that He put *His* hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up: and he was restored, and saw every man clearly.

26 And He sent him away to his house, saying, [k] Neither go into the town, [k] nor tell *it* to any in the town.

k Matt. 8. 4. ch. 5. 43.

27 ¶ And Jesus went out, and His disciples, into the towns of Cæsarea Philippi: and by the way He asked His disciples, saying unto them, Whom do men say that I am?

28 And they answered, [l] John the Baptist: but some *say*, Elias; and others, One of the prophets.

l Matt. 14. 2.

29 And He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Peter answereth and saith unto Him, [m] Thou art the Christ.

m John 6. 69. & 11. 27.

30 And He charged them that they should tell no man of Him.

31 ¶ And [n] He began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and *of* the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.

n Matt. 17. 22.

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off. Thus if the men close by appeared to this man so indistinct as to seem at some distance, they would also seem very large, and so look the more like trees.

25. "He put His hands again" &c. This is the only instance we have of a *progressive* miracle. In all other cases our Lord's cures are complete at once. We do not know why our Lord acted differently in this case, though, as above hinted (22.), there may have been in the blind man a weakness of faith which required this gradual awakening. We may be sure our Lord acted in each case as was best for him on whom He bestowed His blessings (See on vii. 33. and St. John ix. 6.).

27—30. Confession of St. Peter.

St. Matt. xvi. 13—20. St. Luke ix. 18—21.

29. "Thou art the Christ." It is to be observed that the great blessing pronounced upon St. Peter for this confession is given by St. Matthew alone. If St. Mark's Gospel is a record of St. Peter's teaching (See Introduction), it is certainly a remarkable example of modesty on the part of the great Apostle that we should not find that blessing here (See too 33.).

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26. "*Nor tell it.*" See on i. 45, and St. Matt. viii. 4.

32 And He spake that saying openly. And Peter took Him, and began to rebuke Him. A. D. 29.

33 But when He had turned about and looked on His disciples, He rebuked Peter, saying, Get thee behind Me, Satan: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men.

34 And when He had called the people *unto Him* with His disciples also, He said unto them, [o] Whosoever will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.

[o] Matt. 10. 38. Luke 14. 27.

35 For [p] whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for My sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it.

[p] John 12. 25.

36 For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

37 Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

38 [q] Whosoever therefore [r] shall be ashamed of Me and of My words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when He cometh in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.

[q] Matt. 10. 33. Luke 12. 9.

[r] See Rom. 1. 16. 2 Tim. 1. 8. & 2. 12.

CHAPTER IX.

2 *Jesus is transfigured.* 11 *He instructeth His disciples concerning the coming of Elias:* 14 *casteth forth a dumb and deaf spirit:* 30 *foretelleth His death and resurrection:* 33 *exhorteth His disciples to humility:* 38 *bidding them not to prohibit such as be not against them, nor to give offence to any of the faithful.*

31—ix. 1. Jesus foretells His Passion. Rebuke of St. Peter. The Cross to be borne.

St. Matt. xvi. 21—28. St. Luke ix. 22—27.

32. "Openly." Hitherto Jesus had spoken of these things only privately to the disciples. Now He begins to proclaim openly His coming Passion. This seems specially to have caused St. Peter's remonstrance.

33. "Looked on His disciples." This look, doubtless of pain and distress, is only named by the accurate St. Mark (See on iii. 5.).

"Get thee behind Me, Satan." St. Peter's praise is omitted (See on 29.): his rebuke is fully recorded. Is it not true here that "he that "humbleth himself shall be exalted"?

38. "Adulterous." That is, unfaithful to the God to whom they owed their service,—turning from Him, and cleaving to other objects of love, even as one who breaks a marriage vow.

A.D. 29. AND He said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen [a] the kingdom of God come with power.

[a] Matt. 24. 30. & 25. 31. Luke 22. 18.

2 ¶ And after six days Jesus taketh *with Him* Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and He was transfigured before them.

3 And His raiment became shining, exceeding [b] white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them.

[b] Dan. 7. 9. Matt. 28. 3.

4 And there appeared unto them Elias with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus.

5 And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.

CHAPTER IX.

1. "Verily I say" &c. In St. Matthew's Gospel this saying appears to belong to the foregoing conversation, as it closes ch. xvi. Here the division is different, and suggests its connection with the Transfiguration which follows. In truth the saying seems to belong equally to both. It should however be observed that the division of the Bible into chapters and verses is modern, having been completed at the time of the Reformation, or about the middle of the sixteenth century, when the Bible began to be more widely studied. There were certain divisions of chapters made long before, but no division has any authority, as though it were a part of Scripture itself, and therefore no argument can be drawn from it (See *Note* on iii. 19.).

2—10. The Transfiguration.

St. Matt. xvii. 1—9. St. Luke ix. 28—36.

3. "His raiment became shining," &c. This description of the raiment is more minute than that of St. Matthew, who simply says it was "white as the light," and that of St. Luke, who describes it as "white and glistering." May we not believe that in the present account we have the impression made on St. Peter himself by the glorious scene (See on Title "St. Mark.")?

"Fuller." The business of a fuller in ancient times was to cleanse and whiten linen garments, giving to them a brilliant whiteness. In this process a certain sort of earth was used called 'fuller's earth.' There was a "fuller's field" close to Jerusalem (See 2 Kings xviii. 17. Isaiah vii. 3.).

5. "Let us make three tabernacles." Is not this the expression of a very common feeling in moments of great spiritual excitement and joy? Is it not as much as to say, 'Oh that it were possible never to 'lose the bliss and glory of this hour,—never to cease to dwell in the

6 For he wist not what to say; for they were sore afraid. A.D. 29.

7 And there was a cloud that overshadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is My beloved Son: hear Him.

8 And suddenly, when they had looked round about, they saw no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves.

9 And as they came down from the mountain, He charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen from the dead.

10 And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean.

11 ¶ And they asked Him, saying, Why say the scribes [c] that Elias must first come? [c] Mal. 4. 5.

12 And He answered and told them, Elias verily cometh first, and restoreth all things; and [d] how it is written of the Son of man, that He must suffer many things, and [e] be set at nought. [d] Ps. 22. 6. Isai. 53. 2, &c. Dan. 9. 26. [e] Luke 23. 11. Phil. 2. 7.

13 But I say unto you, That [f] Elias is indeed come, and they have done unto him whatsoever they listed, as it is written of him. [f] Matt. 11. 14. & 17. 12. Luke 1. 17.

'very presence of my glorified Lord! Oh that I could leave all earthly 'things, and spend my days in holy adoration among God's saints!' But it cannot be. We must descend from the mount to toils and labours, and little daily duties and trials and temptations. Our religion is a work, not a rapture.

6. "He wist not what to say." The word 'wist' means 'knew.' It comes from an old word—to 'wis'—meaning to 'know'; a word we do not use now, though we use other words closely related to it, such as 'wit,' 'wise,' 'wisdom.'

"They were sore afraid." The secret of the strange petition of the Apostle is here told us. Fear took away in a great measure their power of thought and of speech; and St. Peter could only utter the vain thought, 'Oh to stay here for ever!'

10. "The rising from the dead." Not the *general* resurrection at the last day, for *that* the Pharisees themselves taught, and the Apostles were familiar with the doctrine; but the Resurrection of our Lord, of which He had just spoken.

11—13. Question as to the coming of Elias.

St. Matt. xvii. 10—13.

13. "As it is written of him." We find nothing written in the prophets concerning St. John the Baptist's persecution and death.

A.D. 29. 14 ¶ And when He came to *His* disciples, He saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them.

15 And straightway all the people, when they beheld Him, were greatly amazed, and running to *Him* saluted Him.

16 And He asked the scribes, What question ye [2] with them?

[2] Or, *among yourselves?*

17 And one of the multitude answered and said,

Therefore these words must be understood of the former part of the sentence, which says that "Elias is indeed come." This we know was written of him by the prophet Malachi (iv. 5.).

14—29. Healing of the lunatic child.

St. Matt. xvii. 14—21. St. Luke ix. 37—42.

14. "When He came to His disciples." This was "on the next "day" (St. Luke ix. 37.), the Transfiguration having taken place by night (See on St. Matt. xvii. 2.), and the "disciples" were no doubt the Apostles, with the exception of the three who had been with Christ.

What a sudden and terrible change of scene! From the mount of Transfiguration Jesus comes down to the vale of tears: from heavenly glory to the tortures of one possessed by the devil: from the converse of saints to the mockery of the scribes: from the clear vision of heavenly things to the faithlessness and unbelief of man! The change must have been as sad as when, from the waters of Baptism and the voice of the Father and the anointing of the Spirit, He passed straight into the presence of the prince of darkness.

Jesus had but a little while before given to His Apostles "power and "authority over all devils" (St. Luke ix. 1.), but now they have lost this power, and the Scribes are doubtless putting them to shame before the multitude, and reviling their Master, who now suddenly approaches.

15. "Greatly amazed." The original words imply a great awe and wonder. This may be only a sudden astonishment at the unexpected appearance of our Lord at such a moment; but many suppose that His face may have still retained some traces of its heavenly glory, as that of Moses when he came down from Sinai (Exod. xxxiv. 29, 30.).

"Saluted Him." By thus showing their reverence the people proved that they had not lost their belief in Christ, and that they were distressed by the failure of the Apostles, and hoped now that the Scribes would be put to silence and the sufferer healed.

Christ's sudden appearance in the midst of this scene of trouble and unbelief may well foreshadow to us His coming at the last day. How will then all His enemies be silenced, and all unbelief be put to shame! "When the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?" (St. Luke xviii. 8.).

17. "One of the multitude." The Scribes are silent from fear; the Apostles from shame. It is left to the father of the poor sufferer to explain the state of things.

Master, I have brought unto Thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit; A.D. 29.

18 and wheresoever he taketh him, he [2]teareth him: and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to Thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not.

[2] Or, *dasheth him.*

19 He answereth him, and saith, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him unto Me.

20 And they brought him unto Him: and [3]when he saw Him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming.

[3] ch. 1. 26.

21 And He asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child.

22 And ofttimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if Thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us.

"I have brought unto Thee." The father had come with the intention of bringing his son to Christ, and expecting to find Him.

18. The description of the sufferings of the "child" (See on 21.) in this verse is peculiar to St. Mark.

19. "O faithless generation." This sorrowful rebuke seems to belong to the whole number present, and indeed to the whole Jewish people, of whom they were but samples. It is the expression of a holy grief and pain at the want of faith in man. But though not spoken only to the Apostles, it undoubtedly includes them; for it was *they* who at the moment most showed that want of faith.

20. "When he saw Him." That is, when the evil spirit saw Christ. This is an instance of the terror with which the spirits of darkness always beheld Him who was come to destroy their power (See St. Matt. viii. 29.). Here again we owe to St. Mark (and so possibly to St. Peter, who was certainly an eye-witness,) the vivid description of the torments of the poor afflicted youth.

21. "How long is it" &c. Instead of instantly relieving the sufferings, and expelling the evil spirit, Jesus, calm in the knowledge of His power, questions the anxious father as to the length of time his son had thus suffered. Possibly He wished to draw from the father some confession of faith, or that the crowd should have time to calm themselves, before performing the miracle.

"Of a child." That is, 'From his childhood.' This shows that, though called a "child" (24.), the sufferer had passed the years of childhood. He was a boy, or young man.

22. "If Thou canst do any thing." Compare this doubting, "If "Thou canst" with the leper's, "If Thou wilt, Thou canst" (i. 40.). The leper doubted not of the Lord's *power:* only of His *will.* This

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20. *Tare him.* See on i. 26.

A. D. 29. 23 Jesus said unto him, [h] If thou canst believe,
h ch. 11. 23. Luke 17. 6. John 11. 40. all things *are* possible to him that believeth.

24 And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief.

25 When Jesus saw that the people came running together, He rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, *Thou* dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him.

26 And *the spirit* cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead.

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father doubts of His *power*. He has a very feeble faith. But Jesus will draw out what there is.

"**Help us.**" The father makes himself one with his child. Mercy to one was mercy to both.

23. "**If thou canst believe.**" The father had said, "If Thou canst "do any thing." Jesus takes up his words, and says, "If thou canst "believe." It is as much as to say, 'The doubt lies not in Me but in 'thee. It is not My power, but thy faith, which thou shouldest question.' Man's faith was the measure of Christ's power to do (See on St. Matt. xiii. 58.). Doubtless this man's want of faith had been in part the cause, as well as that of the Apostles, of their failure to perform the miracle. Observe it is, "If thou *canst* believe," not 'If thou *dost* believe.' Christ knew the weakness of the man's faith, but He also saw that he was capable of more faith, and led him on to the confession of his emptiness in order that he might be filled. It is well said that our Lord's conversation with the father of the lunatic child is "a school of "faith" (*Lange*.). This most precious portion is only found in St. Mark.

24. "**With tears.**" There must have been a root of faith deep in the heart, or there would never have been this earnestness of confession. Only he who really believes sees and feels his own depth of unbelief.

"**Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief.**" This short cry has been of priceless value to thousands of imperfect Christians, who, longing after faith, have yet seen their own lack of faith. It is very comforting to know that it was accepted by Christ, and won its petition. Weak faith is not really unbelief, though it seems so in comparison with the faith we long for. It is the smoking flax which Christ will not quench, but will fan into a bright flame.

25. "**The people came running.**" They had been scattered in groups, talking and disputing, and were now attracted probably by the convulsions of the lunatic youth.

"**I charge thee,**" &c. See with what authority Christ speaks. There is a force to be put on the word "*I*." '*I*—not like My disciples, 'who had not power to command—but *I*, the Son of God, the conqueror 'of your prince and chief, the destroyer of your power,—*I* charge thee.'

"**Enter no more into him.**" This is an unusual command in such cases, showing the completeness of the miracle, and guarding the youth from the danger of the evil spirit's return (See St. Matt. xii. 45.).

26. "**As one dead.**" When Satan's time is short, his fury is

27 But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose. A.D. 29.

28 And when He was come into the house, His disciples asked Him privately, Why could not we cast him out?

29 And He said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.

30 ¶ And they departed thence, and passed through Galilee; and He would not that any man should know *it*.

31 For He taught His disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill Him; and after that He is killed, He shall rise the third day.

32 But they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask Him.

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greatest. When he could no longer possess, he would destroy. So will a defeated garrison rather burn down a fortress than let it fall into the hands of the conqueror. But Satan's palace is taken, and his goods are spoiled. They become the property of his Conqueror.

29. "This kind." This kind of evil spirits,—showing a difference among them of power (Compare St. Matt. xii. 45, where the evil spirit takes with himself "seven other spirits more wicked than himself.").

"Can come forth." That is, 'can be cast out.'

"By prayer and fasting." St. Matthew gives our Lord's answer more fully. His first words are, "Because of your unbelief." In this, the latter part of His answer, He takes the Apostles yet farther back, namely to the cause of their want of faith. They lacked faith, because they had been slack in those spiritual exercises which keep faith bright and strong (On fasting as a help to prayer see on St. Matt. vi. 16.). We may note that "prayer and fasting" were weapons which Jesus used in His contest with the prince of darkness (See on St. Luke iv. 3.). We may also note that "prayer and fasting" are as blessed in gaining the Holy Spirit, as they are in expelling the evil one (See Acts xiii. 3. & xiv. 23.).

30—32. Our Lord foretells His death and resurrection.

St. Matt. xvii. 22, 23. St. Luke ix. 43—45.

30. "Passed through Galilee." This was a private journey, during which our Lord took pains to avoid the crowds who usually followed Him, and to have much quiet intercourse with His disciples.

31. "For He taught His disciples." By His disciples is most often meant those who travelled about with Him, but here we may probably include those who believed in Him in the various towns and villages which He visited. Thus the object of this tour was to prepare the minds of His followers for the great events which were so little according to their expectations, and which they found it so hard to understand.

A.D. 29. 33 ¶ [i] And He came to Capernaum: and being in
[i] Matt. 18. 1. Luke 9. 46. & 22. 24. the house He asked them, What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way?

34 But they held their peace: for by the way they had disputed among themselves, who *should be* the greatest.

35 And He sat down, and called the twelve, and
[k] Matt. 20. 26, 27. ch. 10. 43. saith unto them, [k] If any man desire to be first, *the same* shall be last of all, and servant of all.

[l] ch. 10. 16. 36 And [l] He took a child, and set him in the midst of them: and when He had taken him in His arms, He said unto them,

37 Whosoever shall receive one of such children
[m] Matt. 10. 40. in My name, receiveth Me: and [m] whosoever shall receive Me, receiveth not Me, but Him that sent Me.

[n] Num. 11. 28. 38 [n] And John answered Him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in Thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbad him, because he followeth not us.

33—50. Discourse concerning humility and Christ's little ones.

St. Matt. xviii. 1—14. St. Luke ix. 46—50.

34. "**They held their peace.**" Plainly ashamed to say; yet Jesus knew their thoughts, and the question they would like to ask Him, if they dared. It is possible that, though the disciples as a body were silent, yet some one or more of them may have afterwards confessed to the subject of their dispute, and asked the question with which St. Matthew's account of this conversation opens.

35. "**If any man desire to be first,**" &c. This verse is only given by St. Mark, though St. Matthew tells us our Lord spoke very similar words on the occasion of the ambitious request of the sons of Zebedee (See St. Matt. xx. 26.), and St. John relates the teaching of the same lesson in the washing of the Apostles' feet after the last supper (St. John xiii. 4—17.). Our Lord does not say the Apostles were not called to a high place in His kingdom, nor that they were, or would be, all equal in gifts or in glory. He simply shows them the true measure and standard of greatness.

38. "**We saw one casting out devils**" &c. This is omitted by St. Matthew. Our Lord's words as to receiving little children *in His Name* reminded St. John of the man who had been casting out devils *in His Name*, but whom they had *not* received; and he felt they might have been wrong. There was no reason to doubt that this man was a faithful disciple of Christ. Indeed his power to cast out devils proved that he had a firmer faith than that which had so lately failed some of the Apostles themselves (18.). Possibly it was the memory of this failure, coupled with our Lord's words, which led St. John to doubt

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33. "*He asked them.*" See *Note* on St. Matt. xviii. 1.

39 But Jesus said, Forbid him not: [o] for there A. D. 29.
is no man which shall do a miracle in My name, [o] 1 Cor. 12. 3.
that can lightly speak evil of Me.

40 For [p] he that is not against us is on our part. [p] See Matt. 12. 30.

41 [q] For whosoever shall give you a cup of water [q] Matt. 10. 42.
to drink in My name, because ye belong to Christ,
verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward.

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whether they had done right in forbidding the man to exercise his gift. The only complaint they had against him was that he did not join their company.

39. "A miracle in My name." This ought to have been a sufficient warrant to the Apostles that the man was not acting against their Lord's will. Compare the history of Eldad and Medad, who, although they belonged to the seventy elders, yet did not come up with the rest to the tabernacle at the command of Moses, but instead remained in the camp. When God sent His Spirit upon the seventy, so that they prophesied, the same Gift was also given to Eldad and Medad, and they also prophesied, though apart from the others. Joshua wished Moses to forbid them: but "Moses said unto him, Enviest thou for my sake? "would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord "would put His Spirit upon them!" (Numbers xi. 25—29.) Thus Moses was more generous and unselfish than the Apostles. Moreover Eldad and Medad seem to have been wrong in not joining the rest of the seventy; but there is nothing to show that the man who cast out devils ought to have joined the Apostles.

40. "He that is not against us is on our part." Mark how our Lord makes Himself one with His people. He does not say 'Me' but "us." By "not against us" He would mean doing nothing contrary to His will or in opposition to His people. The man of whom St. John spoke had in no way opposed himself either to Christ or to the disciples. We cannot think our Lord would speak thus favourably of any one, whose words or actions were the result of self-will, or neglect of Christ's commands, or contempt of authority, however much they might be spoken or done in Christ's Name. Moreover the very words condemn at once all who are actuated by party-spirit, enmity, or uncharitableness. We should compare this saying with the opposite one, used by our Lord when He was accused of casting out devils by the power of the devil, "He that is not with Me is against Me" (St. Matt. xii. 30.). The two sayings taken together show that all men must range themselves on one side or the other—with Christ, or against Him. There is no neutral ground.

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40. "*Against us—on our part.*" Many old copies read 'you' and 'your' in place of "us" and "our." The sense is not very different. It would teach Christians to regard as fellow-labourers all who are doing Christ's work in a spirit of love and not of enmity, even if they differ some little in their mode of doing it.

41. "*For whosoever shall give you*" &c. These words seem to take up the discourse again from verse 37, where it was broken off by St. John's mention of the man whom they had forbidden to cast out devils. Or it may be that they are rather a continuation of the answer to St. John, saying that even the least work done in Christ's name is accepted by Him, much more then the casting out of devils. But St. Luke makes the answer to St. John end with the words "He that is not against us is for us," which would favour the former view. On the other hand verse 42 takes up the subject dropped at 37 better than 41.

A. D. 29.

42 r And whosoever shall offend one of *these* little
r Luke 17. 1. ones that believe in Me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea.

s Deut. 13. 6. Matt. 5. 29.
2 Or, *cause thee to offend*: and so ver. 45, 47.

43 s And if thy hand 2 offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:

t Isai. 66. 24.

44 t where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

45 And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:

46 where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

3 Or, *cause thee to offend.*

47 And if thine eye 3 offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire:

48 where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

u Lev. 2. 13. Ezek. 43. 24.

49 For every one shall be salted with fire, u and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt.

x Matt. 5. 13. Luke 14. 34.

50 x Salt *is* good: but if the salt have lost his

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44. "Where their worm dieth not," &c. These fearful words, thrice repeated to give solemnity to them, are used to declare the terrible sufferings of the eternally condemned. The expression is taken from Isaiah lxvi. 24, where it is spoken of the valley of Hinnom, or Gehenna, which was a type of the place of eternal punishment (See on "hell-fire," St. Matt. v. 22.).

49. "Every one shall be salted with fire." This is a very difficult verse. The latter half of it refers to the Mosaic command for the use of salt with every burnt sacrifice (Lev. ii. 13.), and is probably a sort of figure, as though it were '*even as* every sacrifice is salted with salt.' What then is meant by the former half of the verse? It seems best on the whole to understand the fire of that sharp self-chastisement and mortification, which is spoken of just before in the cutting off of the right hand and foot, and the plucking out of the right eye. The salt being an emblem of purity, the meaning would be, 'Every one must be 'purified by the fire of self-discipline, even as every sacrifice is seasoned 'with salt.'

50. "Salt is good:" &c. This again is difficult. The salt means

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50. It has been shown that vast quantities of salt obtained from the shores of the Dead Sea were used in the sacrifices of the Temple, that this salt was more liable than other salt to lose its savour, and that it was frequently thrown away and so trodden under foot.

saltness, wherewith will ye season it? [y] Have salt in yourselves, and [z] have peace one with another. A.D. 29.

[y] Eph. 4. 29. Col. 4. 6.
[z] Rom. 12. 18. & 14. 9. 2 Cor. 13. 11. Heb. 12. 14.

CHAPTER X.

2 *Christ disputeth with the Pharisees touching divorcement:* 13 *blesseth the children that are brought unto Him:* 17 *resolveth a rich man how he may inherit life everlasting:* 23 *telleth His disciples of the danger of riches:* 28 *promiseth rewards to them that forsake any thing for the gospel:* 32 *foretelleth His death and resurrection:* 35 *biddeth the two ambitious suitors to think rather of suffering with Him:* 46 *and restoreth to Bartimæus his sight.*

AND [a] He arose from thence, and cometh into the coasts of Judæa by the farther side of Jordan: and the people resort unto Him again; and, as He was wont, He taught them again. A.D. 30. 34th Year of our Lord's life.

[a] John 10. 40. & 11. 7.

2 And the Pharisees came to Him, and asked Him, Is it lawful for a man to put away *his* wife? tempting Him.

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that which is to purify and preserve, and therefore is the same as the "fire" in the last verse. This is "good," for all such purifying processes are good for us. But by our own grossness and evil we may easily rob our trials of their benefit, and then they are like tasteless salt, of no good (See on St. Matt. v. 13.).

"**Have salt in yourselves,**" &c. That is, Bear about with you that spirit of self-discipline, and mortification, which will keep you pure. Our Lord's last words, "Have peace one with another," would carry back the disciples to the dispute which gave rise to this whole discourse (33.). At the same time they are not to be severed from the words next before them, for the "salt" of a subdued and self-denying spirit would be the best preservative against all pride and selfishness and jealousy. The Christian will be severe to self, forbearing to others.

CHAPTER X.

1—12. On Divorce and Marriage.

St. Matt. xix. 1—12. Compare on St. Matt. v. 31, 32.

2. "**The Pharisees.**" It has been thought that the Pharisees chose the question of divorce, knowing our Lord's strict teaching on the subject, and hoping to induce Him to say that which would bring down upon Him the wrath of the adulterous Herod, in whose province our Lord now was. Galilee and Peræa (See *Note* on St. Matt. xix. 1.) formed one province, under Herod Antipas, and his treatment of St. John the Baptist might have led the Pharisees to hope to get rid of our Lord in a similar manner. At all events the question was a very crafty one, for the Jews were divided into two parties upon it, and our Lord's answer was sure to displease the one or the other.

"**To put away his wife.**" In St. Matthew we have "for any cause" added to this question, but the meaning is the same.

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1. "*Into the coasts of Judæa.*" See on St. Luke ix. 51.

A. D. 30. 3 And He answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you?

b Deut. 24. 1. 4 And they said, [b] Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put *her* away.

5 And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept.

c Gen. 1. 27. & 5. 2. 6 But from the beginning of the creation [c] God made them male and female.

d 1 Cor. 6. 16. Ephes. 5. 31. 7 [d] **For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife;**

8 **and they twain shall be one flesh:** so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. Gen. 2. 24.

9 What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

10 And in the house His disciples asked Him again of the same *matter*.

e Luke 16. 18. Rom. 7. 3. 1 Cor. 7. 10, 11. 11 And He saith unto them, [e] Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her.

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10. "**In the house.**" Our Lord frequently gives to His disciples privately some fuller teaching on matters He has first spoken of publicly (See for example St. Matt. xiii. 36.).

11. "**Whosoever shall put away**" &c. It is very striking that the exception given by our Lord in St. Matt. (xix. 9.) is omitted here. We must however remember that *all* the Jews allowed that unfaithfulness to the marriage vow was a lawful cause of divorce, and that the only question among them was as to *other* causes. Thus we must interpret the question of the Pharisees (See 2) as asking whether it was lawful for a man to put away his wife *for other causes* besides adultery. That exception being allowed in the question, it must be allowed also in the answer, and so we must understand our Lord to tell His disciples that all divorce and re-marriage, *save in that one case*, is sinful and adulterous. Yet this much must be said, that, inasmuch as St. Mark (in this place) and St. Luke (xvi. 18.) give our Lord's words without any mention of the exception allowed according to St. Matthew's account, it is plain that Jesus had in view—not the pointing out of the case in which divorce is lawful,—but the statement of the pure and eternal law of God, by which no man may put asunder those whom God has joined together.

"**Against her.**" That is, against his true and lawful wife, whom he has unlawfully put away. The adultery is committed *with* her whom he has taken in place of his true wife, but *against* that his true wife.

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7. "*For this cause*" &c. These words, which in Genesis are spoken by Adam, are in St. Matthew said by Jesus to be spoken by God (See on St. Matt. xix. 5.). Here they seem spoken by our Lord, as though His own command. Yet there is no contradiction. God spake them of old by Adam: God speaks them anew in the person of His incarnate Son.

12 And if a woman shall put away her husband, A.D. 30.
and be married to another, she committeth adultery.

13 ¶ And they brought young children to Him, that He should touch them: and *His* disciples rebuked those that brought *them*.

14 But when Jesus saw *it*, He was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not: for [f] of such is the kingdom of God.

[f] 1 Cor. 14. 20. 1 Pet. 2. 2.

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12. "If a woman shall put away." Though not allowed by Jewish law, this was allowed by the Greeks and Romans; and, St. Mark's Gospel being for these, he records this saying. Of course we must again understand this to mean, 'If a woman put away her husband *for any other* '*cause* than that allowed.' Observe that in St. Matthew's Gospel the conversation is continued further.

13—16. Children brought to Jesus.

St. Matt. xix. 13—15. St. Luke xviii. 15—17.

13. "Young children." St. Luke has "infants," so that these little ones were certainly of too young an age to act and understand for themselves.

"His disciples rebuked those that brought them." They seem to have acted in the mistaken and unchildlike spirit of the so-called 'Baptists' of modern times, who think that, because an infant is too young to understand, it is therefore too young to receive any spiritual gift or blessing. They need to learn that "all gifts of God do not "enter into the soul by the door of the understanding."

14. "Much displeased." No wonder our Lord's holy wrath was thus aroused. There is a pride and a worldly wisdom in denying that God can bless where man can do no act of himself, which might well displease the gracious and loving Saviour.

"Suffer the little children to come unto Me." The Church of Christ has always regarded this as in itself a sufficient warrant for Infant Baptism. It proves that Christ would have little children brought to Him; and how else shall they be brought but in His sacrament of Baptism? They are therein presented to Him, signed with His mark, pledged to His service. But this is not all; for there is the *blessing* as well as the *bringing*. The bringing is man's work; the blessing is Christ's. A "Baptist" (that is, one who in modern days rejects Infant Baptism,) will often allow the bringing, but deny the blessing. He will count it an innocent—perhaps an instructive—ceremony to dedicate little children to Christ: but he will refuse to believe that they gain any thing from Christ, and so will deny a sacramental character to the rite.

"Of such is the kingdom of God." Our Lord says not 'of *these*'—but "of *such*." He would not lose the occasion of setting before His Apostles the lesson that a childlike spirit is needed for those who would enter His kingdom. Surely the denier of Infant Baptism would change

A. D. 30. 15 Verily I say unto you, [g] Whosoever shall not
[g] Matt. 18. 3. receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.

16 And He took them up in His arms, put *His* hands upon them, and blessed them.

17 ¶ And when He was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to Him, and

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our Lord's lesson, and instead of His saying, 'Ye must become like these little ones to be fit for My kingdom,' would rather hear Him say, 'These little ones must become like you to be fit for My kingdom.' An infant can do nothing to win grace. It can only *receive*. This must be the spirit of those who would be fit for Christ's kingdom.

But, if Jesus said "Of *such*," may we not truly add, 'Then also of '*these*'? Is the copy to be admitted, and the pattern shut out? In the Jewish Church under the Old Testament children were able to be admitted into covenant with God at eight days old. Is the new covenant more stern and exclusive? Or does it require more works at our hands before we may begin to partake of its blessings? Nay: not only do our Lord's words prove that infants *may* be brought into His kingdom and receive its blessings; but they also show that this should be the *rule* of His kingdom, and that Adult Baptism is the exception to the rule.

16. "He took them up in His arms." St. Mark alone relates this loving act. So do we doubt not, but earnestly believe, that our Lord favourably receives the infant brought to Him in Baptism, and embraces it with the arms of His mercy (See the Address after the Gospel in the Baptismal Service.).

"Put His hands upon them, and blessed them." Here we see two things:—1. little children receiving a blessing from Christ; and 2. that blessing accompanied by an outward sign, as "a pledge to "assure them thereof." No one would think Christ's blessing a mere outward form. No one would say it did no good to the little children. Let us think the same of Christ's blessing in Baptism. This is not the place to enter farther into this wide subject. But this much must be said, namely, that it is now, and has been from the beginning, the teaching of the Church, that in Baptism we are received into a state of grace and privilege, justified from the guilt of original sin, and made members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven.

17—31. The rich young man, and discourse upon riches.

St. Matt. xix. 16—30. St. Luke xviii. 18—30.

17. "Running, and kneeled." This is one of St. Mark's vivid and striking additions.

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17. "*When He was gone forth.*" This seems to be our Lord's last departure from Peræa (See *Note* on St. Matt. xix. 1.) to Judæa, and must therefore be at the very time when He went to Bethany and raised Lazarus (See 32. and compare St. John x. 40. and xi. 6.).

asked Him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? A.D. 30.

18 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou Me good? *there is* none good but one, *that is*, God.

19 Thou knowest the commandments, [h] **Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother.** Exod. 20. [h] Rom. 13. 9.

20 And he answered and said unto Him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth.

21 Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have [i] treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow Me. [i] Matt. 6. 19, 20. Luke 12. 33. & 16. 9.

22 And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions.

23 And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto His disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

24 And the disciples were astonished at His words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them [k] that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! [k] Job 31. 24. Ps. 52. 7. & 62. 10. 1 Tim. 6. 17.

25 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

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21. "**Beholding him loved him.**" This again is only recorded by St. Mark. Doubtless our Lord fixed upon the young man an earnest loving gaze, which would dwell in his mind long afterwards, and possibly even yet melt his covetous heart (See on St. Matt. xix. 20. and 26.).

"**Take up the cross.**" This portion of our Lord's saying is not given by the other Evangelists. The young man's "cross" would be voluntary poverty; but it was too heavy for him to lift. He could not carry it, for he was weighed down by his gold.

24. "**Children, how hard**" &c. A verse peculiar to St. Mark, and yet of the utmost importance as giving the key to the true danger of riches. No doubt a reader of St. Matthew or St. Luke alone might rightly understand our Lord's warning to apply to love of riches, or trust in riches, rather than to the simple possession of riches; but here we have our Lord's own assurance that such was His meaning. Nevertheless we must not forget that the mere possession of riches ever brings with it the danger and temptation of loving and trusting in them; so that "they that *have* riches" and they "that *trust* in riches" may be more nearly one than we sometimes think.

A.D. 30.

26 And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved?

27 And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men *it is* impossible, but not with God: for [l] with God all things are possible.

[l] Jer. 32. 17. Luke 1. 37.

28 Then Peter began to say unto Him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed Thee.

29 And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My sake, and the gospel's,

[m] 2 Chron. 25. 9.

30 [m] but he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.

[n] Matt. 20. 16. Luke 13. 30.

31 [n] But many *that are* first shall be last; and the last first.

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30. "Houses, and brethren," &c. St. Mark is here much fuller than the other Evangelists, St. Matthew having "an hundred-fold," and St. Luke "manifold more." That these blessings belong to this life is expressly said. They are "now in this time." What then are they? Brethren, sisters, mothers, and children, it is easy to understand, for in the Church of Christ we gain a spiritual relationship with Christ's people, more than making amends for the loss or breach of earthly ties. But "houses" and "lands" are also spoken of. It may be that we should not press these words into meaning more than rich spiritual possessions. For the love of earthly relations which we sacrifice, we receive a purer holier love; for the things of this world which we count as loss we receive gifts a hundred-fold more precious: Thus, "having nothing, "and yet possessing all things" (2 Cor. vi. 10.). But it may also be that our Lord here speaks of that fellowship in earthly possessions, which is always an obligation binding upon Christians, and which was literally carried out by the primitive Church at Jerusalem. Doubtless a community of goods is simply impossible in these days, but the duty of the rich to make the poor partakers of their wealth is none the less a part of Christianity.

"With persecutions." How strange and startling this word in the midst of a cluster of blessings! Yet the Christian's persecutions are often his choicest blessings. St. Mark alone names this word. "He himself had "been once affrighted by persecution from doing the work of the Gospel, "and would desire to prepare others to encounter trials which for a time "had mastered himself" (*Wordsworth.*). May we not also suppose that St. Peter may have delighted to relate with accuracy this answer to his own question, and that St. Mark may have learnt it from him? (See on *Title* "St. Mark.").

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32. "*Going up to Jerusalem.*' See *Note* on 17, and *Note* on St. Matt. xix. 1.

32 ¶ And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus went before them: and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid. And He took again the twelve, and began to tell them what things should happen unto Him, A.D. 30. ° ch. 8. 31. & 9. 31. Luke 9. 22.

33 *saying*, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles:

34 and they shall mock Him, and shall scourge Him, and shall spit upon Him, and shall kill Him: and the third day He shall rise again.

35 ¶ And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, come unto Him, saying, Master, we would that Thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we shall desire.

32—34. Christ again foretells His Passion.

St. Matt. xx. 17—19. St. Luke xviii. 31—34.

32. "Jesus went before them." Boldly and openly setting His face towards Judæa, where His bitter enemies were awaiting Him. "They "were amazed" at His thus seeming to despise the dangers which before He had avoided (St. John vii. 1, 10.), and which He again avoided for a little while after reaching Judæa, until the time was come (St. John xi. 54.).

"He took again the twelve." This was the third great announcement of our Lord's approaching suffering. The fear the disciples showed in seeing Him going so openly before them on the road to Jerusalem seems to be the reason why He thus again most clearly foretold the events about to take place. The thorough knowledge of these events beforehand would be the surest way to prevent the disciples being too much terrified and confounded by them. They would then see that thus it must be. But they were "slow of heart to believe all that the "prophets had spoken" (St. Luke xxiv. 25.).

33. "Shall deliver Him to the Gentiles." The Jews delivered Jesus up to Pontius Pilate the Gentile Roman Governor, because they themselves had no power to put any one to death (See St. John xviii. 30, 31, 35.).

35—45. Request of the Sons of Zebedee.

St. Matt. xx. 20—28.

35. "James and John." They really got their mother to speak for them, as we learn from St. Matthew. This request shows us the reason

A.D. 30.

36 And He said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you?

37 They said unto Him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on Thy right hand, and the other on Thy left hand, in Thy glory.

38 But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?

39 And they said unto Him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized:

40 but to sit on My right hand and on My left hand is not Mine to give; but *it shall be given to them* for whom it is prepared.

41 And when the ten heard *it*, they began to be much displeased with James and John.

42 But Jesus called them *to Him*, and saith unto them, [p] Ye know that they which [2] are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them.

p Luke 22. 25.
2 Or, *think good.*

43 [q] But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister:

q ch. 9. 35. Luke 9. 48.

44 and whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all.

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why the Apostles found it so hard to understand Christ whenever He spoke of His approaching sufferings. They thought of His kingdom always as one of glory, not of suffering. Even to the last they could not forget their old hopes of some temporal greatness (See St. Luke xxiv. 21.). Thus this request comes, to us most strangely, immediately after one of the clearest prophecies of the Lord's sufferings and death.

37. "Grant unto us" &c. Although we are right in calling this an ambitious and presumptuous request, yet doubtless there was in it much love also. They wish, not only to be above others, but, perhaps even more, to be close to Christ. Our Lord answers *both* these thoughts; but first that of nearness to Himself.

38. "The cup." When these two disciples were permitted to witness the Agony in Gethsemane, and to hear (as possibly they did) the prayer there uttered, they would learn better to understand the meaning of drinking the cup their Lord was to drink (See on St. Matt. xxvi. 39.).

41. "When the ten heard it," &c. They also plainly shared in the same feelings of ambition, which had found a place in the hearts of the two, else why their displeasure?

43, 44. "Shall be." This means 'must be,' or, as in St. Matthew, "let him be."

45 For even [r] the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and [s] to give His life a ransom for many. A.D. 30.

[r] John 13. 14. Phil. 2. 7.
[s] 1 Tim. 2. 6. Titus 2. 14.

46 ¶ And they came to Jericho: and as He went out of Jericho with His disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimæus, the son of Timæus, sat by the highway side begging.

47 And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, *Thou* Son of David, have mercy on me.

48 And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, *Thou* Son of David, have mercy on me.

49 And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; He calleth thee.

46—52. Healing of blind Bartimæus near Jericho.

St. Matt. xx. 29—34. St. Luke xviii. 35—43.

46. "**A great number of people.**" These were probably Jews from Galilee and Peræa, going up to Jerusalem for the approaching Passover. The Galilæans used to cross the Jordan North of Samaria, and travel Southwards on the other side in Peræa, crossing again near Jericho, to avoid passing through Samaria.

"**Blind Bartimæus.**" Evidently a well-known blind man, which would account for St. Mark's attention being so fixed upon his case that he does not name another blind man who was with him.

47. "**Thou Son of David.**" This title implies a belief that Jesus was the promised Messiah.

48. "**Many charged him**" &c. They would not have him interrupt the solemn and almost triumphant progress of our Lord. They did not know that to aid the distressed was never counted an interruption by Him. If the supposition is correct that this blind man may have first begun to cry after our Lord as He entered the city (St. Luke), may it not be that our Lord's not having attended to him then may have been thought by the people a sufficient repulse, and this second appeal an unwarrantable liberty?

49. "**Be of good comfort, rise; He calleth thee.**" These words

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46. "*They came to Jericho.*" It would appear that our Lord and His disciples must have re-crossed the Jordan on their return from Peræa (See *Note* on 17.) some time before this, since they must have already paid the visit to Bethany when Lazarus was raised, and retired thence to Ephraim (St. John xi. 54.), which place lay to the North-West of Jericho (See Map.).

"*Bartimæus.*" This name simply means 'Son of Timæus,' the syllable 'Bar' at the beginning of Hebrew names signifying 'Son of,' as in Bar-Jonah, Bartholomew, Barabbas, Barsabas, Barnabas.

A.D. 30.

50 And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus.

51 And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto Him, Lord, that I might receive my sight.

52 And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; [t] thy faith hath [2] made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.

[t] Matt. 9. 22. ch. 5. 34.
[2] Or, *saved thee.*

CHAPTER XI.

1 *Christ rideth with triumph into Jerusalem:* 12 *curseth the fruitless leafy tree:* 15 *purgeth the temple:* 20 *exhorteth His disciples to stedfastness of faith, and to forgive their enemies:* 27 *and defendeth the lawfulness of His actions, by the witness of John, who was a man sent of God.*

AND when they came nigh to Jerusalem, unto Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount of Olives, He sendeth forth two of His disciples,

2 and saith unto them, Go your way into the village over against you: and as soon as ye be entered into it, ye shall find a colt tied, whereon never man sat; loose him, and bring *him.*

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are only given by St. Mark, as also the "casting away his garment"—that is, his loose outer garment—in the next verse. These little particulars seem to belong to the description of an eye-witness.

52. "Thy faith." That is, in Christ's Divine power and mercy. Perhaps this faith was shown in *persevering* petition, like that of the woman of Canaan (St. Matt. xv. 28.).

"Followed Jesus in the way." The company of those who at all times "follow Jesus" is made up of those who are thankful for His mercies. When He gives us spiritual sight, we too shall gladly follow Him "in the way," even if it be the way (like that in which Jesus then went) to suffering and to death.

CHAPTER XI.

1—11. The triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

St. Matt. xxi. 1—11. St. Luke xix. 28—40. St. John xii. 12—19.

2. "A colt tied, whereon never man sat." The mother was with the colt, though not mentioned except by St. Matthew. Whatsoever

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1. "*Unto Bethphage and Bethany.*" We find from St. John that our Lord remained for the Sabbath at Bethany on His way from Jericho to Jerusalem. Of this the other Evangelists take no notice. It was also *from* Bethany that our Lord set out on His triumphal entry into Jerusalem. How then do we read here, and in St. Luke, of our Lord coming "unto Bethphage *and Bethany?*" Probably because these two Evangelists, not pausing to relate the visit to Bethany, describe the whole journey from Jericho to Jerusalem in one, and it was, of course, when our Lord came to *Bethany* that He sent on the disciples to Bethphage, which was somewhat nearer Jerusalem. St. Matthew only mentions Bethphage in this place.

3 And if any man say unto you, Why do ye this? say ye that the Lord hath need of him; and straightway he will send him hither. A.D. 30.

4 And they went their way, and found the colt tied by the door without in a place where two ways met; and they loose him.

5 And certain of them that stood there said unto them, What do ye, loosing the colt?

6 And they said unto them even as Jesus had commanded: and they let them go.

7 And they brought the colt to Jesus, and cast their garments on him; and He sat upon him.

8 And many spread their garments in the way: and others cut down branches off the trees, and strawed *them* in the way.

9 And they that went before, and they that followed, cried, saying, **Hosanna; Blessed *is* He that cometh in the name of the Lord:** Ps. 118. 25, 26.

10 Blessed *be* the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord: [a] Hosanna in the highest. [a] Ps. 148. 1.

11 And Jesus entered into Jerusalem, and into the temple: and when He had looked round about upon all things, and now the eventide was come, He went out unto Bethany with the twelve.

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had never been used for any other purpose was held fittest for sacred use, like the kine which brought up the ark from the country of the Philistines (1 Sam. vi. 7.). So our Lord was laid in a tomb, "wherein "never man before was laid" (St. Luke xxiii. 53.).

4. "Tied by the door without" &c. This minute description of the exact spot is peculiar to St. Mark, and must have come from one very familiar with the events.

10. "Blessed be the kingdom of our father David." These words are only related by St. Mark, and show us that the people, who were welcoming Jesus in the words of the 118th Psalm, which they applied to Him as the Messiah, still looked for the setting up of an earthly kingdom, and believed Christ was come as Son of David to establish it. We cannot wonder at this ignorance on the part of the people, when even the Apostles themselves so long cherished the same hope. The history of our Lord's triumphal entry into Jerusalem is appointed for the Gospel on Advent Sunday, because it is a type of His coming again at the last day, and of the welcome with which His Saints will hail that coming.

11. "When He had looked round about" &c. The actual cleansing of the Temple from the buyers and sellers took place the next day (See *Note* on St. Matt. xxi. 1.).

A.D. 30. 12 ¶ And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, He was hungry:

13 and seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, He came, if haply He might find any thing thereon: and when He came to it, He found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not *yet*.

14 And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever. And His disciples heard *it*.

15 ¶ And they come to Jerusalem: and Jesus went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves;

16 and would not suffer that any man should carry *any* vessel through the temple.

17 And He taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, **My house shall be called** [2]**of all nations the house of prayer?** but [b] ye have made it a den of thieves. Isaiah 56. 7.

18 And [c] the scribes and chief priests heard *it*, and sought how they might destroy Him: for they

[2] Or, *an house of prayer for all nations?*
[b] Jer. 7. 11.
[c] Matt. 21. 45, 46. Luke 19. 47.

12—14. The cursing of the barren fig-tree.

St. Matt. xxi. 17—22.

12. "**The morrow.**" The Monday in Holy-Week.

13. "**If haply**" &c. "Haply" means the same as 'perhaps.' The season for figs being later than this, it was only the fact of the tree being so early in leaf that made it not unlikely it would also have on it some early figs. The earlier figs, which remain green on the leafless tree all the winter, ripen soon after Easter. They are obtained in Italy in the month of May.

14. "**Jesus answered.**" As though the tree had spoken by its leaves, and made profession of fruitfulness.

15—18. The second cleansing of the Temple.

St. Matt. xxi. 1, 12—16. St. Luke xix. 45, 46.

Compare the first cleansing of the Temple, St. John ii. 13—17.

16. "**Any vessel.**" This strictest command of all is only named by St. Mark. Probably the people used to make a thoroughfare through the outer court of the Temple, carrying their ordinary vessels through it.

17. "**Of all nations.**" These words, though belonging to the passage in Isaiah, are not quoted by the other Evangelists. St. Mark may possibly add them as specially appropriate to the Gentiles, for whom he wrote his Gospel.

feared Him, because [d] all the people was astonished at His doctrine. A.D. 30.

[d] Matt. 7. 28. ch. 1. 22. Luke 4. 3.

19 ¶ And when even was come, He went out of the city.

20 And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots.

21 And Peter calling to remembrance saith unto Him, Master, behold, the fig tree which Thou cursedst is withered away.

22 And Jesus answering saith unto them, [2] Have faith in God.

[2] Or, *Have the faith of God.*

23 For [e] verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.

[e] Matt. 17. 2. Luke 17. 6.

24 Therefore I say unto you, [f] What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive *them*, and ye shall have *them*.

[f] Matt. 7. 7. Luke 11. 9. John 14. 13. & 15. 7. & 16. 24. James 1. 5, 6.

19—26. The withering of the fig-tree, and the power of prayer.

St. Matt. xxi. 17—22.

19. "When even was come." Therefore, though probably passing the spot, yet in the twilight or moonlight, they would not see the effect of our Lord's curse upon the fig-tree.

20. "Dried up from the roots." Christ's word had scorched it like a lightning-stroke. So will it be with those who make good profession, but bear no fruits of holiness, when He shall say, "Depart from "Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire" (St. Matt. xxv. 41.). It has been well pointed out that, when our Lord wished to show forth His love and mercy, He exercised His Divine power on the persons of *men*: when He wished to show forth His judgments against sin, He exercised His power upon a *tree*, and that a barren one.

21. "Master, behold, the fig tree" &c. St. Peter's exclamation is called forth by our Lord's display of miraculous power. He seems not to notice the great moral lesson of the act. This our Lord too leaves unnoticed, probably because it is, like a jewel in a crystal casket, so plain that no one could fail to see it. He thus only answers the Apostle's wondering remark as to the effect of His curse, telling him that by faith he might do works no less wonderful.

23. "Shall not doubt" &c. That is, shall not doubt God's power and love. These will, in answer to prayer, effect miracles of grace, greater even than would be the casting of the Mount of Olives into the Mediterranean Sea (See on St. Matt. xvii. 20.).

24. "Believe that ye receive them." Plainly the believing a thing

A. D. 30.

25 And when ye stand praying, [g] forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.

[g] Matt. 6. 14. Col. 3. 13.

[h] Matt. 18. 35.

26 But [h] if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.

27 ¶ And they come again to Jerusalem: and as He was walking in the temple, there come to Him the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders,

28 and say unto Him, By what authority doest Thou these things? and who gave Thee this authority to do these things?

29 And Jesus answered and said unto them, I will also ask of you one [2] question, and answer Me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things.

[2] Or, *thing.*

30 The baptism of John, was *it* from heaven, or of men? answer Me.

31 And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; He will say, Why then did ye not believe him?

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to be true cannot make it true. This cannot therefore mean, 'Believe 'that you already possess the thing asked for, and then you will possess 'it.' The meaning is, 'Believe that God hears your prayer, and 'grants it, if for your good, and then you shall have what you desire.' But, if you have faith, you will not desire what God desires not for you.

25. "When ye stand praying." This and the next verses are given only by St. Mark in this place. Having spoken of the prevailing power of the prayer of faith, our Lord takes occasion to repeat what He has said on former occasions as to the necessity of forgiveness on our part if our prayers for forgiveness are to be heard by God. (See on St. Matt. v. 23. and vi. 14.)

27—33. Our Lord questioned as to His authority.

St. Matt. xxi. 23—27. St. Luke xx. 1—8.

27. "The chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders." Probably this was not a chance meeting with our Lord, but a planned and formal demand on the part of the Sanhedrin, or high council (See on St. Matt. xxvi. 3.), who were busy plotting His destruction. Reckoning from Palm-Sunday, as the day of the triumphal entry into Jerusalem, and allowing that the brief visit to the Temple named in verse 11 took place on the same day, this questioning by the Chief Priests and Scribes must have taken place on the Tuesday in Holy-Week (Compare 11, 12, 15, 19, and 27.).

28. "These things." Chiefly the driving of the buyers and sellers from the Temple, which seems to have taken place the day before, but probably including all our Lord's acts and words of authority.

32 But if we shall say, Of men; they feared the people: for [i]all *men* counted John, that he was a prophet indeed. A. D. 30. [i] Mat. 3. 5. & 14. 5. ch. 6. 20.

33 And they answered and said unto Jesus, We cannot tell. And Jesus answering saith unto them, Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things.

CHAPTER XII.

1 *In a parable of the vineyard let out to unthankful husbandmen, Christ foretelleth the reprobation of the Jews, and the calling of the Gentiles.* 13 *He avoideth the snare of the Pharisees and Herodians about paying tribute to Cæsar:* 18 *convinceth the error of the Sadducees, who denied the resurrection:* 28 *resolveth the scribe, who questioned of the first commandment:* 35 *refuteth the opinion that the scribes held of Christ:* 38 *bidding the people to beware of their ambition and hypocrisy:* 41 *and commendeth the poor widow for her two mites, above all.*

AND He began to speak unto them by parables. A *certain* man planted a vineyard, and set an hedge about *it*, and digged *a place for* the winefat, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country.

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32. "They feared" &c. St. Mark here breaks off his sentence, and gives in his own words the answer to the reasoning, "If we shall say, "Of men." St. Matthew and St. Luke carry on the answer as spoken among themselves by the Chief-priests and Scribes. St. Luke tells us more plainly still that it was stoning which they feared; that is, not, of course, the legal punishment of stoning, but that which might be the result of the rage of a lawless multitude, such as stoned St. Stephen.

CHAPTER XII.

1—12. Parable of the wicked Husbandmen.

St. Matt. xxi. 33—46. St. Luke xx. 9—19.

1. "By parables." St. Mark only gives this one, which was the second of the three spoken by our Lord at this time; the first being that of the "Two sons," and the third that of the "Marriage of the "King's Son."

"An hedge" &c. Some have thought that we may see in the hedge, the wine-press, and the tower, types of God's ordinances for His kingdom. Thus the hedge would be that which marks it off from the world without, the sign and badge of the covenant. This was of old Circumcision; it is now the sacrament of Baptism. The wine-press is interpreted of the altar of sacrifice under the old covenant, and of the sacrament of Christ's Blood under the new. The Tower may be the ordinance of a ministry of watchmen to watch over the Lord's vineyard. But such interpretations we accept very doubtfully.

A. D. 30.

2 And at the season he sent to the husbandmen a servant, that he might receive from the husbandmen of the fruit of the vineyard.

3 And they caught *him*, and beat him, and sent *him* away empty.

4 And again he sent unto them another servant; and at him they cast stones, and wounded *him* in the head, and sent *him* away shamefully handled.

5 And again he sent another; and him they killed, and many others; beating some, and killing some.

6 Having yet therefore one son, his wellbeloved, he sent him also last unto them, saying, They will reverence my son.

7 But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be our's.

8 And they took him, and killed *him*, and cast *him* out of the vineyard.

9 What shall therefore the lord of the vineyard do? he will come and destroy the husbandmen, and will give the vineyard unto others.

10 And have ye not read this scripture; **The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner:**

11 **this was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?** Ps. 118. 22, 23.

[a] ch. 11. 18. John 7. 25, 30, 44.

12 [a] And they sought to lay hold on Him, but feared the people: for they knew that He had spoken the parable against them: and they left Him, and went their way.

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4. "**At him they cast stones,**" &c. The minuter description of this verse is peculiar to St. Mark. We cannot name the particular prophets whose treatment is described in these verses. Possibly our Lord did not intend so much to refer to special cases as to describe the general persecution and rejection of those whom God sent to bear His messages to His people.

9. "**He will come and destroy**" &c. These words are in St. Matthew spoken by the Chief Priests and Scribes in answer to our Lord's question. It is very easy to see how He may have drawn the words from them, and then adopted them, repeating them as His own solemn sentence.

11. "**This was the Lord's doing.**" So St. Paul, having spoken of our Lord's humiliation, writes, "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted "Him, and given Him a name which is above every name" (Phil. ii. 9.). Very "marvellous in our eyes" is the exaltation of Christ through rejection and suffering.

13 ¶ And they send unto Him certain of the Pharisees and of the Herodians, to catch Him in *His* words. A.D. 30.

14 And when they were come, they say unto Him, Master, we know that Thou art true, and carest for no man: for Thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth: Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, or not?

15 Shall we give, or shall we not give? But He, knowing their hypocrisy, said unto them, Why tempt ye Me? bring Me a [2] penny, that I may see *it*.

16 And they brought *it*. And He saith unto them, Whose *is* this image and superscription? And they said unto Him, Cæsar's.

[2] Valuing of our money sevenpence halfpenny, as Matt. 18. 28.

17 And Jesus answering said unto them, Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's. And they marvelled at Him.

18 ¶ Then come unto Him the Sadducees, [b] which say there is no resurrection; and they asked Him, saying,

[b] Acts 23. 8.

19 Master, [c] Moses wrote unto us, If a man's brother die, and leave *his* wife *behind him*, and leave no children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

[c] Deut. 25. 5.

20 Now there were seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and dying left no seed.

21 And the second took her, and died, neither left he any seed: and the third likewise.

13—17. Question as to paying tribute to Cæsar.

St. Matt. xxii. 15—22. St. Luke xx. 20—26.

17. **"Render to Cæsar" &c.** Where the two rules here given seem to clash, there can be no doubt which is to be followed. See the answer of the Apostles St. Peter and St. John to the command laid on them not to teach in the name of Jesus (Acts iv. 19. and v. 29.). Only in all cases where the plea of conscience is used in opposing lawful authority, we must be very sure that we have God's law on our side, and are not mistaking for it our own notions or interpretations of it, or even (as is common enough) our own self-will.

18—27. Reply to the Sadducees concerning the Resurrection.

St. Matt. xxii. 23—33. St. Luke xx. 27—40.

A. D. 30. 22 And the seven had her, and left no seed: last of all the woman died also.

23 In the resurrection therefore, when they shall rise, whose wife shall she be of them? for the seven had her to wife.

24 And Jesus answering said unto them, Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the scriptures, neither the power of God?

25 For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but [d] are as the angels which are in heaven.

[d] 1 Cor. 15. 42, 49, 52.

26 And as touching the dead, that they rise: have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, **I *am* the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?** Ex. 3. 6, 16.

27 He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living: ye therefore do greatly err.

28 ¶ And one of the scribes came, and having

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25. "**As the angels.**" That is, in a pure and spiritual state, in which human passions and earthly ties find no place. That heavenly ties are higher and holier than earthly our Lord teaches in the most forcible manner possible, when, in answer to the woman who spoke of the blessedness of His own "blessed" mother, He said, "Yea, rather, "blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it" (St. Luke xi. 28.). All who do so shall hereafter be united in a glorious and blissful union with their Lord and with one another, far surpassing the closest and most blessed of earthly fellowships.

28—34. Question as to the great Commandment.

St. Matt. xxii. 34—40.

28. "**One of the scribes.**" From St. Matthew we learn that he belonged to the party of the Pharisees, and was a lawyer. Though St. Matthew speaks of his "tempting" Jesus, yet we see from the fact that he was struck by the wisdom of our Lord's answer to the Sadducees —"perceiving that He had answered them well"—, and also by our Lord's encouraging words to him afterwards (34), that he was a better man, and more open to instruction, than those with whom he was associated. Thus when we read of his "tempting" our Lord, either we must take the word in the milder sense of 'proving' or 'trying,' though with no evil purpose (See on St. Matthew), or else we must suppose the

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26. "*In the bush.*" It is generally thought that these words mean 'in the chapter, or passage, about the Bush.' The Jewish Scriptures being divided into sections each bearing the name of the principal subject contained in it, it is very probable that this may be the true meaning here, and also in St. Luke's words "at the "bush." Although in the Hebrew Bible there is no section actually so named.

heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that He had answered them well, asked Him, Which is the first commandment of all? A. D. 30.

29 And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments *is*, [e] **Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord:** [e] Luke 10. 27.

30 **and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength:** this *is* the first commandment. Deut. 6. 4, 5.

31 And the second *is* like, *namely* this, [f] **Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.** There is none other commandment greater than these. [f] Rom. 13. 9. Gal. 5. 14. James 2. 8. Lev. 19. 18.

"tempting" to be spoken rather of those who put him forward than of the man himself, who may have been only their mouth-piece.

"Which is the first commandment of all?" This was a question much in dispute at that time among the Jews, who made many vain and foolish distinctions between the various commandments of the Law. They did not understand the truth taught by St. James (ii. 10.) that "whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in "one point, he is guilty of all." The Law is to be regarded as one; having one source, that is, God; one inward principle, that is, love; one outward expression, that is, obedience. Every breach of any part of the law is equally an offence against God, against love, against obedience.

29. "Hear, O Israel;" &c. St. Mark quotes the passage in full. St. Matthew only gives the actual command. And what a command this is! Who has ever obeyed, or can ever obey it? How then should such a command, so far above what we can attain to, humble us, and teach us our helplessness and sinfulness. Let us adopt in this matter the prayer which was uttered by the father of the lunatic child, only putting 'love' for 'faith,' and say, 'Lord, I love Thee; help 'Thou my want of love.'

31. "And the second is like." "The first is the *sun*, so to speak, "of the spiritual life:—this the *lesser light*, which reflects the shining "of that other" (*Alford.*). The scribe had not asked for the *second* commandment also, but our Lord gave it him, to make His answer complete. Yet in reality the first was enough; for the love of God, when perfect, embraces the love of man. Only it *never is perfect*, and this is why a *second* command is needed; and this is why *ten* commandments are needed; and this is why a whole Bible full of commandments is needed. If love were perfect, it would do all things; it could not sin. Yet the first and second are really not only "like," but *one:* for their principle and root are the same, namely love. They only differ in the object of the love. They are branches of the same tree. And yet again they do not really differ in the object of the love. They look at two sides of the same thing. For he who loves God will love his brother also; and he who loves his neighbour as himself will surely love God also.

A. D. 30.

32 And the scribe said unto Him, Well, Master, Thou hast said the truth: for there is one God;
g Deu. 4. 39. Isai. 45. 6, 14. & 46. 9. g and there is none other but He:
33 and to love Him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love *his* neighbour as himself, h is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.
h 1 Sam. 15. 22. Hos. 6. 6. Micah 6. 6, 7, 8.
34 And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, He said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. i And no man after that durst ask Him *any question.*
i Mat. 22. 46.

35 ¶ And Jesus answered and said, while He taught in the temple, How say the scribes that Christ is the Son of David?
k 2 Sam. 23. 2. 36 For David himself said k by the Holy Ghost,
The LORD said to my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool. Ps. 110. 1.
37 David therefore himself calleth Him Lord; and whence is He *then* his Son? And the common people heard Him gladly.

l ch. 4. 2. 38 ¶ And l He said unto them in His doctrine,

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33. "**More than all whole burnt offerings**" &c. Though the prophets of old taught this truth (See 1 Sam. xv. 22. Ps. li. 16, 17. Hosea vi. 6. Micah vi. 7, 8.), yet it was just this that the Pharisees were so slow to learn. This scribe had a truer insight into God's law than many.

34. "**Thou art not far**" &c. "Thou standest with this knowledge "at the door: set thy foot on the threshold of repentance, and come "within to faith" (*Stier.*).

35—37. Christ's question concerning Himself.

St. Matt. xxii. 41—46. St. Luke xx. 41—44.

36. "**By the Holy Ghost.**" The Inspiration of the Psalmist is here very distinctly affirmed.

37. "**The common people heard Him gladly.**" They were more humble and teachable than the Scribes and Pharisees, and "God resisteth "the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble" (St. James iv. 6.).

38—40. The Scribes condemned.

St. Matt. xxiii. 1. 5—7. 14. St. Luke xx. 45—47.

38. "**In His doctrine.**" St. Mark and St. Luke only give these few verses out of our Lord's long and severe rebuke of the hypocrisy of the Scribes and Pharisees contained in St. Matt. xxiii. By the words "in

Beware of the scribes, which love to go in long clothing, and [m] *love* salutations in the marketplaces, 39 and the chief seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost rooms at feasts: 40 which devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers: these shall receive greater damnation. A. D. 30.

[m] Luke 11. 43.

41 ¶ And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast [2] money [n] into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much. 42 And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two [3] mites, which make a farthing. 43 And He called *unto Him* His disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That [o] this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: 44 for all *they* did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, [p] *even* all her living.

[2] *A piece of brass money:* See Matt. 10. 9.

[n] 2 Kings 12. 9.

[3] It is the seventh part of one piece of that brass money.

[o] 2 Cor. 8. 12.

[p] Deut. 24. 6. 1 John 3. 17.

"His doctrine," St. Mark seems to imply that he is only giving a part of our Lord's teaching.

41—44. The Widow's Mite.

St. Luke xxi. 1—4.

41. "Jesus sat." Our Lord will not leave the Temple, which was His Father's house, with words of condemnation on His lips. He rests awhile, and watches, loving rather to mark any good which He can find there than to dwell to the last upon the evil.

"The treasury." It is uncertain in what part of the Temple this was, though it is supposed to have been in that court known as the "Court of the women," which lay on the East side of the central enclosure of the Temple (See on St. John viii. 12, 20.). It was plainly the place where the offerings to the Temple service were made.

42. "Two mites, which make a farthing." St. Mark explains the value of the two mites for his Gentile readers. The mite was a very small Jewish coin. A curious law was in force in our Lord's time forbidding a single mite being put into the treasury.

43. "Cast more in, than all" &c. Yes, more in God's sight, for He measures not by the amount of the sum given, but by its proportion to the means of the giver.

44. "Even all her living." That is, all she had at that time to live upon. She doubtless trusted in God, and said to herself, 'The Lord 'will provide.' How many would laugh at this poor widow's simple-minded gift of all she had! Yet Jesus accepted it. Possibly she had

A. D. 30.

CHAPTER XIII.

1 Christ foretelleth the destruction of the temple: 9 the persecutions for the gospel: 10 that the gospel must be preached to all nations: 14 that great calamities shall happen to the Jews: 24 and the manner of His coming to judgment: 32 the hour whereof being known to none, every man is to watch and pray, that we be not found unprovided, when He cometh to each one particularly by death.

AND as He went out of the temple, one of His disciples saith unto Him, Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings *are here!*

2 And Jesus answering said unto him, Seest thou
[a] Luke 19. 44. these great buildings? [a] there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

3 And as He sat upon the mount of Olives over against the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked Him privately,

4 Tell us, when shall these things be? and what *shall be* the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?

[b] Jer. 29. 8. Eph. 5. 6. 1 Thess. 2. 3. 5 And Jesus answering them began to say, [b] Take heed lest any *man* deceive you:

6 for many shall come in My name, saying, I am *Christ;* and shall deceive many.

7 And when ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars, be ye not troubled: for *such things* must needs be; but the end *shall* not *be* yet.

[2] The word in the original importeth *the pains of a woman in travail.*

8 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there shall be famines and troubles: these *are* the beginnings of [2] sorrows.

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some special reason for gratitude, having received some special mercy. At any rate her gift was the token of a loving generous heart, and that gave it its value.

How contemptible is it to hear a rich man speak of his "*mite*," when he gives some mere trifle. His "*mite*," if he understood the word, would mean his *all.*

CHAPTER XIII.

Prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem, and of the end of the world.

St. Matt. xxiv. 1—44. St. Luke xxi. 5—36.

3 "Peter" &c. These four names are only given by St. Mark. Probably this minuteness of account is due to St. Peter himself (See on Title, "St. Mark.").

9 But [c] take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten: and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them. A. D. 30.

[c] Matt. 10. 17, 18. Rev. 2. 10.

10 And the gospel must first be published among all nations.

11 [d] But when they shall lead *you*, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, [e] but the Holy Ghost.

[d] Matt. 10. 19. Luke 12. 11.

[e] Acts 2. 4. & 4. 8, 31.

12 Now [f] the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against *their* parents, and shall cause them to be put to death.

[f] Mic. 7. 6. Matt. 10. 21.

13 And ye shall be hated of all *men* for My name's sake: but [g] he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

[g] Dan. 12. 12. Matt. 10. 22. Rev. 2. 10.

14 But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, [h] spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth understand,) then let them that be in Judæa flee to the mountains:

[h] Dan. 9. 27.

15 and let him that is on the housetop not go

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9. "**But take heed**" &c. From this to the end of the 13th verse (with the exception of verse 10,) appears to be a solemn repetition of words first spoken by our Lord upon the sending forth of His Apostles (Compare St. Matthew x. 17—22.). St. Matthew, having given the words in the earlier discourse, does not repeat them in this place. St. Luke, like St. Mark, gives them here, though with some variation of expressions. If we adopt the view that St. Matthew in his 10th chapter gathers together advice and directions to the Apostles spoken at various times (See on St. Matt. x. 8.), in order to present them in one view, it is possible to suppose that he has in this case purposely transferred these verses to his chapter concerning the mission of the Apostles, because they belong so completely to that subject.

"**To councils.**" Two of those who had questioned our Lord, St. Peter and St. John, were brought before the council at Jerusalem for preaching in the name of Christ (Acts iv. 6, 7.), and St. Peter, with other Apostles, a second time shortly after (Acts v. 27.), on which occasion they were "beaten" (Acts v. 40.).

"**Rulers and kings.**" So was St. Paul brought before Felix, Festus, and king Agrippa (Acts xxiv—xxvi.).

14. "**Where it ought not.**" That is, as we learn from St. Matthew, "in the holy place," which can hardly mean any other place than the Temple.

A. D. 30. down into the house, neither enter *therein*, to take any thing out of his house:

16 and let him that is in the field not turn back again for to take up his garment.

k Luke 23. 29. 17 [k] But woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!

18 And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter.

f Dan. 9. 26. & 12. 1. Joel 2. 2. 19 [f] For *in* those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be.

20 And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom He hath chosen, He hath shortened the days.

m Luke 17. 23. 21 [m] And then if any man shall say to you, Lo, here *is* Christ; or, lo, *He is* there; believe *him* not:

22 for false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if *it were* possible, even the elect.

n 2 Pet. 3. 17. 23 But [n] take ye heed: behold, I have foretold you all things.

o Dan. 7. 10. Zeph. 1. 15. 24 [o] But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light,

25 and the stars of heaven shall fall, and the p Dan. 7. 13, 14. Matt. 16. 27. ch. 14. 62. Acts 1. 11. 1 Thess. 4. 16. 2 Thess. 1. 7, 10. Rev. 1. 7. powers that are in heaven shall be shaken.

26 [p] And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.

27 And then shall He send His angels, and shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from

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18. "**In the winter.**" St. Mark omits "neither on the sabbath day," since the reasons against the latter would require explanation to his Gentile readers, and would seem to them of less weight.

24. "**But in those days, after that tribulation.**" "*Those* days" plainly do not mean the days just before spoken of, for those were the days of tribulation, and our Lord now speaks of days "*after* that tribu-"lation." May we not understand "those days" as meaning 'those 'great days which are coming,' just as "that day" is used of the great day of judgment (St. Matt. vii. 22. 2 Tim. i. 12, 18. & iv. 8.)? Then, if we understand the "tribulation" to extend over the whole time of the rejection and dispersion of the Jews (See on St. Matt. xxiv. 29.), we shall cease to feel the difficulty as to the *seeming nearness* of the days spoken of as "*those* days."

the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven. A.D. 30.

28 Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near:

29 so ye in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, *even* at the doors.

30 Verily I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done.

31 Heaven and earth shall pass away: but [q] My words shall not pass away. [q] Isai. 40. 8.

32 But of that day and *that* hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.

33 [r] Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is. [r] Matt. 25. 13. Luke 12. 40. Rom. 13. 11. 1 Thess. 5. 6.

34 [s] *For the Son of man is* as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. [s] Matt. 25. 14.

35 Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when

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27. "From the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost "part of heaven." In St. Matthew the words are, "from one end of "heaven to the other." The meaning is the same. The "heaven" here is used in the lower sense of the mere sky, and the expression the "end of the heaven" simply means the horizon, or the point where the earth and sky seem to meet.

32. "Neither the Son." These striking words are not given by St. Matthew, though the same truth is implied in the words, "My "Father *only*." Observe in these words is contained the direct answer to the question of the Apostles at the beginning of the chapter (4.). We find a like question and a like answer recorded in the conversation immediately before our Lord's Ascension (Acts i. 6, 7.).

34. "As a man taking a far journey." This and the next verses seem to be the first portion of the short parable, of which the conclusion is given by St. Matthew (xxiv. 45—51.). The concluding three verses of St. Mark (35—37.) are again the practical application of the whole. Thus, if we would read the whole passage in completeness, we should read first St. Mark 34, then St. Matthew 45—51, and lastly St. Mark 35—37.

"The porter." That is, the gate-keeper. There are differences of office and position in the Church of Christ. By the servants, to whom "authority" was given, our Lord probably means His ministers, the stewards of His mysteries. By "every man," to whom was set his appointed work, He would mean all other members of the Church.

A.D. 30. the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning:
36 lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping.
37 And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.

CHAPTER XIV.

1 *A conspiracy against Christ.* 3 *Precious ointment is poured on His head by a woman.* 10 *Judas selleth his Master for money.* 12 *Christ Himself foretelleth how He shall be betrayed of one of His disciples:* 22 *after the passover prepared, and eaten, instituteth His supper:* 26 *declareth aforehand the flight of all His disciples, and Peter's denial.* 43 *Judas betrayeth Him with a kiss.* 46 *He is apprehended in the garden,* 53 *falsely accused, and impiously condemned of the Jews' council:* 65 *shamefully abused by them:* 66 *and thrice denied of Peter.*

[a] John 11. 55. & 13. 1. AFTER [a] two days was *the feast of* the passover, and of unleavened bread: and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take Him by craft, and put *Him* to death.
2 But they said, Not on the feast *day*, lest there be an uproar of the people.

[b] See Luke 7. 37. 3 ¶ [b] And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as He sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of [2] spikenard

[2] Or, *pure nard*, or, *liquid nard.*

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35. "At even," &c. The four 'watches,' into which the Jews divided the night, are here mentioned. They consisted of three hours each, the first beginning at six o'clock in the evening (See on St. Matt. xiv. 25.).

36. "Sleeping." In the description of the evil servant in St. Matthew quarrelling and drunkenness are the sins laid against him. Here, in applying the lesson, our Lord warns His hearers against the milder sin of sloth, for this is enough to condemn.

37. "Unto all." Lest any should think that the watching is only the *porter's* business, only the duty of Apostles and such as are called to special offices in the Church.

CHAPTER XIV.

1, 2. The Jews plot Christ's death.

St. Matt. xxvi. 1—5. St. Luke xxii. 1, 2.

1. "By craft." St. Luke gives the reason for the chief priests and Scribes finding it necessary to act with "craft," and "subtilty" (St. Matthew.). It was because they "feared the people."

3—9. The anointing by Mary of Bethany.

St. Matt. xxvi. 6—13. St. John xii. 1—8.

3. "Box of ointment." It was about a pound weight, as we learn from St. John, and was thus not only very costly in quality, but also

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1. "*The feast of the passover*," &c. See on St. Matth. xxvi. 17. The feast of "unleavened bread" was only another name for the feast of the Passover, as we see by the parallel passage in St. Luke.

very precious; and she brake the box, and poured *it* on His head. A.D. 30.

4 And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made?

5 For it might have been sold for more than three hundred [2] pence, and have been given to the poor. And they murmured against her. [2] See Matt. 18. 28.

6 And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on Me.

7 For [c] ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but Me ye have not always. [c] Deut. 15. 11.

8 She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint My body to the burying.

9 Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, *this* also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.

10 ¶ And Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went unto the chief priests, to betray Him unto them.

11 And when they heard *it*, they were glad, and promised to give him money. And he sought how he might conveniently betray Him.

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in quantity. The "box" may have been a vase, the neck of which might be broken when used, the precious ointment being sealed up in it, so that it could not be got at without thus breaking the vessel.

5. "More than three hundred pence." The Jewish penny being reckoned at sevenpence halfpenny this sum would represent £9. 7*s.* 6*d.*, but, since money went much farther then than it does now, the penny being a day's wages (See on St. Matt. xx. 2.), the value of the ointment was really much greater than this.

6. "A good work." The goodness of any act lies in its motive, not in its usefulness, as some think. This woman's act had for its motive a fervent love, and that love made it a "good work" in Christ's sight.

10, 11. The bargain of Judas with the Chief-priests.

St. Matt. xxvi. 14—16. St. Luke xxii. 3—6.

10. "To betray Him." It may seem strange that any treachery of this sort was necessary, when our Lord showed Himself so openly in the temple and elsewhere. But His enemies dared not attack Him in public. What they sought for was some opportunity of taking Him "*in the absence of the multitude*" (St. Luke.).

11. "Promised." From all three accounts we see that this was only an agreement. We do not hear when the money was actually

A. D. 30.

12 ¶ And the first day of unleavened bread, when they [2]killed the passover, His disciples said unto Him, Where wilt Thou that we go and prepare that Thou mayest eat the passover?

[2] Or, *sacrificed.*

13 And He sendeth forth two of His disciples, and saith unto them, Go ye into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water: follow him.

14 And wheresoever he shall go in, say ye to the goodman of the house, The Master saith, Where is the guestchamber, where I shall eat the passover with My disciples?

15 And he will shew you a large upper room furnished *and* prepared: there make ready for us.

16 And His disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.

17 ¶ And in the evening He cometh with the twelve.

18 And as they sat and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, One of you which eateth with Me shall betray Me.

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paid, but it is probable that it was immediately after Judas had fulfilled his part of the bargain by placing Jesus in the hands of His enemies.

12—16. The disciples sent to prepare the Passover.

St. Matt. xxvi. 17—19. St. Luke xxii. 7—13.

13. "Two of His disciples." These were St. Peter and St. John, as we learn from St. Luke.

"A man bearing a pitcher." This sign, miraculously made known to the two Apostles, is recorded also by St. Luke. The idea that our Lord had made any agreement beforehand with the master of the house, and that the meeting with the man bearing the pitcher of water was in accordance with such agreement, is most improbable. The direction was given, and the sign appointed, by the same miraculous foreknowledge which gave the direction as to the finding of the ass before the riding into Jerusalem on Palm-Sunday (xi. 2.).

17—21. Announcement of the Betrayal.

St. Matt. xxvi. 20—25. St. Luke xxii. 21—23. St. John xiii. 21—30.

18. "One of you which eateth with Me." St. Mark alone adds the words "which eateth with Me" in this first mention of the betrayal. We must not forget that our Lord had in His mind the prophecy (Psalm xli. 9.), "He that eateth bread with Me hath lifted up his "heel against Me" (St. John xiii. 18.); and also that treachery against one with whom food has been partaken has always been looked upon

19 And they began to be sorrowful, and to say unto Him one by one, *Is* it I? and another *said*, *Is* it I? A. D. 30.

20 And He answered and said unto them, *It is* one of the twelve, that dippeth with Me in the dish.

21 The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of Him: but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! good were it for that man if he had never been born.

22 ¶ [d] And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake *it*, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is My body. [d] 1 Cor. 11. 23.

23 And He took the cup, and when He had given thanks, He gave *it* to them: and they all drank of it.

24 And He said unto them, This is My blood of the new testament, which is shed for many.

25 Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God.

26 ¶ And when they had sung an [2] hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives. [2] Or, *psalm.*

27 And Jesus saith unto them, All ye shall be offended because of Me this night: for it is written, **I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.** Zech. 13. 7.

28 But [e] after that I am risen, I will go before you into Galilee. [e] ch. 16. 7.

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as a sin of deepest dye in the East. Even robbers will not injure one with whom they have eaten.

21. "**Good were it for that man**" &c. Observe, our Lord does not say it were a good thing *in itself*, if Judas had never been born; but only, it were good *for him*. No doubt Judas was raised up, as Pharaoh was of old, for God's righteous purposes. God used him as an instrument. But God's using the wicked to work out His ends is no excuse for their wickedness. Evil does not become good because God brings good out of it.

22—25. The Institution of the Lord's Supper.

St. Matt. xxvi. 26—29. St. Luke xxii. 19, 20.

26—31. The conversation on going out towards the Mount of Olives.

St. Matt. xxvi. 30—35. St. Luke xxii. 31—34.

A. D. 30. 29 [f] But Peter said unto Him, Although all shall
[f] John 13. 37, 38. be offended, yet *will* not I.

30 And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this day, *even* in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny Me thrice.

31 But he spake the more vehemently, If I should die with Thee, I will not deny Thee in any wise. Likewise also said they all.

[g] John 18. 1. 32 ¶ [g] And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane: and He saith to His disciples, Sit ye here, while I shall pray.

33 And He taketh with Him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy;

[h] John 12. 27. 34 and saith unto them, [h] My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch.

35 And He went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him.

[i] Rom. 8. 15. Gal. 4. 6. [k] Heb. 5. 7. [l] John 5. 30. & 6. 38. 36 And He said, [i] Abba, Father, [k] all things *are* possible unto Thee; take away this cup from Me: [l] nevertheless not what I will, but what Thou wilt.

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30. "This day, even in this night," &c. The words of this prediction are given most fully and accurately in this Gospel. Observe how *soon* they were to be fulfilled. Even before that very night in which they were spoken should pass away. A very few hours would suffice to change the eager boaster into the cowardly liar. Oh what a fall for Peter the Rock!

31. "The more vehemently." Vehemence—a hasty rash impetuous spirit—was St. Peter's stumbling-block. Had he spoken less vehemently, and more humbly, he might have been in less danger. "When "pride cometh, then cometh shame" (Prov. xi. 2.).

32—42. The Agony in Gethsemane.

St. Matt. xxvi. 36—46. St. Luke xxii. 39—46.

33. "Sore amazed." That is, 'greatly troubled in mind.' There is no idea of *surprise* here, as in our common use of the word 'amazed.'

35. "The hour." That is, the hour of agony, and possibly the whole period of suffering now beginning (Compare St. John xii. 27.).

36. "Abba, Father." "Abba" was the Jewish word for Father, and was a word so dear to the disciples of our Lord that they do not translate it, but give it in the original tongue, together with the Greek translation, signifying 'Father.' Our translators have rightly followed the same course, keeping the word in the original (See references.).

37 And He cometh, and findeth them sleeping, A.D. 30.
and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? couldest
not thou watch one hour?

38 Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temp-
tation. [m] The spirit truly *is* ready, but the flesh [m] Rom. 7. 23. Gal. 5. 17.
is weak.

39 And again He went away, and prayed, and
spake the same words.

40 And when He returned, He found them asleep
again, (for their eyes were heavy,) neither wist they
what to answer Him.

41 And He cometh the third time, and saith unto
them, Sleep on now, and take *your* rest: it is
enough, [n] the hour is come; behold, the Son of man [n] John 13. 1.
is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

42 [o] Rise up, let us go; lo, he that betrayeth Me [o] John 18. 1, 2.
is at hand.

43 ¶ And immediately, while He yet spake, cometh
Judas, one of the twelve, and with him a great
multitude with swords and staves, from the chief
priests and the scribes and the elders.

44 And he that betrayed Him had given them
a token, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same
is He; take Him, and lead *Him* away safely.

45 And as soon as he was come, he goeth straight-
way to Him, and saith, Master, Master; and kissed
Him.

46 And they laid their hands on Him, and took
Him.

47 And one of them that stood by drew a sword,
and smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off
his ear.

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37. "**Simon, sleepest thou?**" Observe the address. It is 'Simon', his old carnal name, not 'Peter', the Rock, now (See on St. Luke xxii. 31.). Though the three Apostles are all addressed, St. Peter is singled out because of his late strong and confident assurances of his firmness and strength.

41. "**It is enough.**" That is, 'Ye need watch no more.'

43—52. Betrayal and taking of Jesus.

St. Matt. xxvi. 47—56. St. Luke xxii. 47—53. St. John xviii. 1—12.

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40. "*Wist they.*" 'Knew they' (See on ix. 6.).

A. D. 30.

48 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Are ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and *with* staves to take Me?

49 I was daily with you in the temple teaching, and ye took Me not: but [p] the scriptures must be fulfilled.

p Ps. 22. 6. Is. 53. 7, &c. Luke 22. 37. & 24. 44.

50 [q] And they all forsook Him, and fled.

q ver. 27. Ps. 88. 8.

51 And there followed Him a certain young man, having a linen cloth cast about *his* naked *body;* and the young men laid hold on him:

52 and he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked.

53 ¶ And they led Jesus away to the high priest: and with him were assembled all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes.

54 And Peter followed Him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire.

55 And the chief priests and all the council sought for witness against Jesus to put Him to death; and found none.

56 For many bare false witness against Him, but their witness agreed not together.

57 And there arose certain, and bare false witness against him, saying,

r ch. 15. 29. John 2. 19.

58 We heard Him say, [r] I will destroy this temple

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51. "A certain young man," &c. It has been thought by many that this young man may be St. Mark himself, which would quite account for the mention of the circumstance in this Gospel, and for the withholding of the name. If not St. Mark, it was very probably some one well known to the readers of St. Mark's Gospel. The courage of this young man in following, when "all forsook Him and fled," is very remarkable.

53—64. Jesus before Caiaphas.

St. Matt. xxvi. 57—66. St. John xviii. 19—24.

58. "I will destroy this temple" &c. The words here do not agree with those brought forward in St. Matthew's Gospel. And some have thought therefore that the two accounts may possibly give the testimony of the two false witnesses, whose witness did not agree together. But the two forms of the saying agree in *sense*, and it is more probable that the false witnesses, examined doubtless separately, made some contradictions as to the place or time or circumstances of the saying, which proved they were not to be believed. Although the very judges sought for false witnesses, and would no doubt have received any false testi-

that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands. A.D. 30.

59 But neither so did their witness agree together.

60 And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest Thou nothing? what *is it which* these witness against Thee?

61 But [s]He held His peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked Him, and said unto Him, Art Thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?

62 And Jesus said, I am: [t]and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

63 Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses?

64 Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned Him to be guilty of death.

65 ¶ And some began to spit on Him, and to cover His face, and to buffet Him, and to say unto Him, Prophesy: and the servants did strike Him with the palms of their hands.

66 ¶ And as Peter was beneath in the palace, there cometh one of the maids of the high priest:

67 and when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him, and said, And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth.

68 But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. And he went out into the porch; and the cock crew.

[s] Isai. 53. 7.

[t] Matt. 24. 30. Luke 22. 69.

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mony without looking into it too closely, yet they were compelled, for appearance's sake, to go through the legal forms in examining the witnesses.

61. "The Son of the Blessed." "The Blessed" was a very common Jewish expression for God, though it is not used in the New Testament, except here by Caiaphas.

65. The mocking of the servants.

St. Matt. xxvi. 67, 68. St. Luke xxii. 63—65.

66—72. St. Peter's denial and repentance.

St. Matt. xxvi. 69—75. St. Luke xxii. 54—62. St. John xviii. 13—27.

66. "Beneath." The rooms round the central court were probably on a higher level, approached by steps (See on St. Matt. xxvi. 69.).

A. D. 30.

69 And a maid saw him again, and began to say to them that stood by, This is *one* of them.

70 And he denied it again. And a little after, they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art *one* of them: [u] for thou art a Galilæan, and thy speech agreeth *thereto*.

u Acts 2. 7.

71 But he began to curse and to swear, *saying*, I know not this Man of whom ye speak.

72 And the second time the cock crew. And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny Me thrice. And [2] when he thought thereon, he wept.

2 Or, *he wept abundantly*, or, *he began to weep.*

CHAPTER XV.

1 *Jesus brought bound, and accused before Pilate.* 15 *Upon the clamour of the common people, the murderer Barabbas is loosed, and Jesus delivered up to be crucified.* 17 *He is crowned with thorns,* 19 *spit on, and mocked:* 21 *fainteth in bearing His cross:* 27 *hangeth between two thieves:* 29 *suffereth the triumphing reproaches of the Jews:* 39 *but confessed by the centurion to be the Son of God:* 43 *and is honourably buried by Joseph.*

[a] AND straightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried *Him* away, and delivered *Him* to Pilate.

a Ps. 2. 2. Acts 3. 13. & 4. 26.

2 And Pilate asked Him, Art Thou the King of the Jews? And He answering said unto him, Thou sayest *it*.

3 And the chief priests accused Him of many things: but He answered nothing.

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69. "To them that stood by." One of whom doubtless took upon himself to question the Apostle, since his answer is addressed to a *man* (St. Luke xxii. 60.).

72. "The second time." Here we have an instance of St. Mark's usual accuracy, as also in the "twice" in this same verse. The other Evangelists only take notice of the *second* cock-crowing.

CHAPTER XV.

1—15. Jesus before Pilate.

St. Matt. xxvii. 1, 2. 11—26. St. Luke xxiii. 1—5. 13—25. St. John xviii. 28—40.

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69. "*A maid.*" In the Greek it is '*the* 'maid,' which does not mean the same maid who saw him and spoke to him before, for St. Matthew distinctly says this second was "*another* maid." It simply means the maid in attendance, or the maid who happened to be there, just as we might in a similar account speak of 'the servant' without meaning any particular servant.

4 And Pilate asked Him again, saying, Answerest A. D. 30.
Thou nothing? behold how many things they witness against Thee.

5 [b] But Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate [b] Isai. 53. 7. John 19. 9.
marvelled.

6 Now at *that* feast he released unto them one prisoner, whomsoever they desired.

7 And there was *one* named Barabbas, *which lay* bound with them that had made insurrection with him, who had committed murder in the insurrection.

8 And the multitude crying aloud began to desire *him to do* as he had ever done unto them.

9 But Pilate answered them, saying, Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews?

10 For he knew that the chief priests had delivered Him for envy.

11 But [c] the chief priests moved the people, that [c] Acts 3. 14.
he should rather release Barabbas unto them.

12 And Pilate answered and said again unto them, What will ye then that I shall do *unto Him* whom ye call the King of the Jews?

13 And they cried out again, Crucify Him.

14 Then Pilate said unto them, Why, what evil hath He done? And they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify Him.

15 And *so* Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged *Him*, to be crucified.

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7. "With them that had made insurrection with him." We find from these words that Barabbas was one of a band, who had probably risen in rebellion against the Roman government, and who, if so, had doubtless forbidden to give tribute to Cæsar. The word "who" in this verse is plural, and states that the whole band, not Barabbas only, had committed murder.

8. "Began to desire him." From this verse we should gather, what does not appear in the other Gospels, that the first mention of the release of a prisoner at the Passover came rather from the people than from Pilate.

10. "For envy." Envy is ill-will towards another on account of some superiority in that other over ourselves. The Chief-priests bore ill-will towards Christ because He was so much better and holier than they, and gained so much more of the love of the people.

15. "Willing to content the people." Here is one of Pilate's unworthy motives laid bare. Another—that of the selfish fear of Cæsar's displeasure—comes out more fully in St. John. He prefers his popularity and his place to justice.

A. D. 30. 16 ¶ And the soldiers led Him away into the hall, called Prætorium; and they call together the whole band.

17 And they clothed Him with purple, and platted a crown of thorns, and put it about His *head*,

18 and began to salute Him, Hail, King of the Jews!

19 And they smote Him on the head with a reed, and did spit upon Him, and bowing *their* knees worshipped Him.

20 ¶ And when they had mocked Him, they took off the purple from Him, and put His own clothes on Him, and led Him out to crucify Him.

21 And they compel one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear His cross.

22 And they bring Him unto the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, The place of a skull.

23 And they gave Him to drink wine mingled with myrrh: but He received *it* not.

16—19. Jesus mocked by the Roman soldiers.

St. Matt. xxvii. 27—31. St. John xix. 1—3.

16. "Prætorium." 'Prætor' was the title of the Roman governor, and 'Prætorium' his court or place of business. In St. Matthew this same word is translated the "common hall" (xxvii. 27.). The Prætorium being a building of many rooms, the part here meant would probably be the open court in the middle. Pilate occupied the palace built by Herod the Great on the Western side of Jerusalem (See Plan) as his Prætorium.

20—41. The Crucifixion.

St. Matt. xxvii. 32—56. St. Luke xxiii. 26—49. St. John xix. 17—37.

21. "Simon a Cyrenian." St. Mark alone gives the names of Simon's sons, "Alexander and Rufus." We know nothing more of these two, unless the second be the same as the Rufus mentioned by St. Paul as a member of the Church in Rome (Rom. xvi. 13.); but the mere fact of their names being recorded would lead us to suppose that they afterwards were converted to Christianity. It may be worth noticing that, if St. Mark's Gospel was written for the use of the Church in Rome (See on Title), and this Rufus was a member of that Church, it would account for the mention of the name here.

22. "They bring." The word translated "bring" is literally 'bear', and it has been supposed that our Lord, having sunk under the burden of the Cross, was too weak to continue the terrible journey unassisted, and was either supported, or actually carried, by others during the latter part of it.

23. "Wine mingled with myrrh." Or "vinegar mingled with "gall," as St. Matthew describes it. This drink was for the purpose of stupefying the sufferer, and deadening his sense of pain.

24 And when they had crucified Him, [d] they parted His garments, casting lots upon them, what every man should take. A. D. 30. [d] Ps. 22. 18.

25 And it was the third hour, and they crucified Him.

26 And the superscription of His accusation was written over, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

27 And with Him they crucify two thieves; the one on His right hand, and the other on His left.

28 And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, **And He was numbered with the transgressors.** Is. 53. 12.

29 And [e] they that passed by railed on Him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, [f] Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest *it* in three days, [e] Ps. 22. 7. [f] ch. 14. 58. John 2. 19.

30 save Thyself, and come down from the cross.

31 Likewise also the chief priests mocking said among themselves with the scribes, He saved others; Himself He cannot save.

32 Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they that were crucified with Him reviled Him.

33 And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.

34 And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, **Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?** which is, being interpreted, **My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?** [f] Ps. 22. 1.

35 And some of them that stood by, when they heard *it*, said, Behold, He calleth Elias.

36 And one ran and filled a spunge full of vinegar, and put *it* on a reed, and [g] gave Him to drink, saying, Let alone; let us see whether Elias will come to take Him down. [g] Ps. 69. 21.

37 And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost.

38 And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.

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25. "**The third hour.**" That is, nine o'clock in the morning. Thus the whole Crucifixion occupied six hours, as our Lord died at three o'clock.

27. "**Thieves.**" Perhaps 'robbers' would better express the original word, these two having probably been rather high-way robbers, using violence towards their victims, than simply "thieves."

A. D. 30. 39 And when the centurion, which stood over against Him, saw that He so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this Man was the Son of God.

h Ps. 38. 11. 40 There were also women looking on [h] afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome;

i Luke 8. 2, 3. 41 (who also, when He was in Galilee, [i] followed Him, and ministered unto Him;) and many other women which came up with Him unto Jerusalem.

42 ¶ And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath,

k Luke 2. 25, 38. 43 Joseph of Arimathæa, an honourable counsellor, which also [k] waited for the kingdom of God,

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40. "James the less." Literally 'the little'. This name may have been given to him from his height or from his age, and does not of necessity imply any inferiority. The name was, of course, given to distinguish this James from others of the same name. He was son of Cleophas (St. John xix. 25.). Whether he was the Apostle, James the son of Alphæus, or not, and whether he was "James, the Lord's brother" (Gal. i. 19.), or not, depends upon the view taken of the "brethren of "our Lord" (See on St. Matt. xiii. 55.).

"Salome." Wife of Zebedee, and mother of St. James and St. John (See St. Matt. xxvii. 56.).

42—47. The Burial.

St. Matt. xxvii. 57—61. St. Luke xxiii. 50—56. St. John xix. 38—42.

42. "The preparation." The usual name for Friday. Indeed in the East Friday is still called by this name. The meaning of the name is given in the next words, "the day before the sabbath" (See on St. John xix. 14.). As the Jews began their sabbath at sunset on the Friday, the "even" spoken of in this verse must be an earlier hour, the *first* evening, answering to our late afternoon (See on St. Matt. xiv. 15 and 23.).

43. "Counsellor." That is, a member of the Jewish high council, or Sanhedrin (See on St. Matt. xxvi. 3.).

"Waited for the kingdom of God." This (which is also St. Luke's expression) answers to "Who also himself was Jesus' disciple" in St. Matthew. Christ's kingdom was always closely joined with His Person in the minds of all His disciples. *They* were in danger of thinking more of the kingdom than of the Person. Perhaps *our* danger is of thinking only of the Person and forgetting the kingdom (See on St. Matt. iii. 2.).

came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus. A.D. 30.

44 And Pilate marvelled if He were already dead: and calling *unto him* the centurion, he asked him whether He had been any while dead.

45 And when he knew *it* of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph.

46 And he bought fine linen, and took Him down, and wrapped Him in the linen, and laid Him in a sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre.

47 And Mary Magdalene and Mary *the mother* of Joses beheld where He was laid.

CHAPTER XVI.

1 *An angel declareth the resurrection of Christ to three women.* 9 *Christ Himself appeareth to Mary Magdalene:* 12 *to two going into the country:* 14 *then to the apostles,* 15 *whom He sendeth forth to preach the gospel:* 19 *and ascendeth into heaven.*

AND when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the *mother* of James, and

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"Went in boldly." This is one of the lesser points of detail, which give life and vividness to a description, and of which St. Mark is so fond. It is remarkable that both Joseph of Arimathæa and Nicodemus, who had been timid and secret disciples before, now that Jesus is dead, find courage to confess themselves (See St. John). The death of Christ has smitten their hearts, and drawn forth a new stream of love.

44. "Pilate marvelled" &c. Probably it was only a very short time before this that he had given orders for the breaking of the legs of the crucified to hasten their deaths (St. John.), and he doubted whether it would be right as yet to suffer Joseph to remove the Body. Possibly the Centurion, after having been so deeply moved at the sight of Christ's death, may have accompanied Joseph to Pilate to back up his request. At any rate his testimony to our Lord's death was of use. Pilate probably granted the request with the more readiness as feeling that Jesus had been unjustly put to death, and was really innocent of the crimes charged against Him.

47. Mary the mother of Joses." The same as the Mary "mother "of James the less and of Joses" in 40. Observe two sons, James and Joses, are mentioned there; here only Joses: in the next verse (xvi. 1.) only James.

CHAPTER XVI.

1—8. The Resurrection.

St. Matt. xxviii. 1—8. St. Luke xxiv. 1—12. St. John xx. 1—10.

1. "When the sabbath was past." That is, probably, during the evening of the sabbath, after sunset (See on St. Luke xxiii. 56.).

A.D. 30. Salome, [a] had bought sweet spices, that they might
[a] Luke 23. 56. come and anoint Him.

2 And very early in the morning the first *day* of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun.

3 And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?

4 And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great.

5 And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted.

6 And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: He is risen; He is not here: behold the place where they laid Him.

7 But go your way, tell His disciples and Peter that He goeth before you into Galilee: there shall
[b] Mat. 26. 32. ch. 14. 28. ye see Him, [b] as He said unto you.

"Anoint Him." The wrapping of our Lord's Body in "myrrh and "aloes," as described by St. John, was only a hasty and temporary embalmment, there being no time for more. The completion of this pious act of reverence was left till after the Sabbath (See on St. John xix. 39, 40.).

2. "At the rising of the sun." St. Matthew says, "As it began to "dawn," St. John, "When it was yet dark." Plainly the women started while it was yet dark, and gathered at the sepulchre by sunrise. It is not necessary to suppose that they all came together.

4. "For it was very great." Some understand this as the reason why the women, approaching the tomb in the morning twilight, saw that the stone was rolled away. It may however well be that the size of the stone is given simply as the reason why it was rolled away; God interfering just because the task was too great for unassisted human strength.

5. "A young man." That is, an Angel having the appearance of a young man, for there is no age in heaven. This was probably the Angel who had rolled away the stone before the arrival of the women, and (as St. Matthew tells us) at first sat upon it, but had now entered the sepulchre, and (as St. Mark with his customary minuteness of description relates) was "sitting on the right side."

7. "And Peter." This addition is given only by St. Mark, and it is surely not improbable that he may have received the words direct

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CHAPTER XVI.

1. "*Had bought.*" The Greek here is simply 'bought.' The word "had" was probably introduced by our translators to make this verse agree with their view of St. Luke xxiii. 56, where it *seems* as if the woman had bought the spices *before* the Sabbath.

8 And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled and were amazed: neither said they any thing to any *man;* for they were afraid. A.D. 30.

9 ¶ Now when *Jesus* was risen early the first *day* of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, [c] out of whom He had cast seven devils.

10 [d] *And* she went and told them that had been with Him, as they mourned and wept.

11 And they, when they had heard that He was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not.

12 After that He appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country.

13 And they went and told *it* unto the residue: neither believed they them.

14 [e] Afterward He appeared unto the eleven as

[c] Luke 8. 2.

[d] Luke 24. 10, 11.

[e] 1 Cor. 15. 5.

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from the Apostle himself (See on title "Saint Mark"), who would treasure with deep gratitude this mark of Divine favour. The Apostle is specially mentioned by the Angel as a sign to him of forgiveness for his denial.

8. "Neither said they any thing to any man." That is, plainly, as they went to tell the disciples. Fear and awe sealed their lips, and in silence they sped with their wondrous message.

9—18. Appearances of Christ after His Resurrection.

St. Matt. xxviii. 9—20. St. Luke xxiv. 13—43. St. John xx. 11—29.

9. "Mary Magdalene, out of whom" &c. The word Magdalene means a native of Magdala, a small place on the shore of the sea of Galilee (See St. Matt. xv. 39.). The affliction from which the great Healer had rescued this poor woman was similar to that from which He delivered the demoniac of Gadara, in whom dwelt many devils (See v. 9.). She had been possessed in this awful manner and degree. We have nothing to inform us in what way the seven devils afflicted her. Nor is there anything in the Gospels, except only the fact that she had been thus possessed, which certainly *may* have been a consequence of great sin, to lead to the almost universal idea that she had been a woman of a sinful life (See on St. Luke vii. 37.).

12. "In another form." That is, with an appearance different from His usual appearance. St. Luke tells us that the eyes of the two disciples were "holden" so that they should not know Him. Whether the change of appearance were mostly in His Person or mostly in their eyes makes no difference. Whichever way the effect was produced, it is equally true that He appeared *to them* "in another form."

14. "Unto the eleven." We cannot be at all sure which appearance

A.D. 30. they sat [2] at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen Him after He was risen.

15 [f] And He said unto them, Go ye into all the world, [g] and preach the gospel to every creature.

16 [h] He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; [i] but he that believeth not shall be damned.

17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; [k] In My name shall they cast out devils; [l] they shall speak with new tongues;

[2] Or, *together.*
[f] John 15. 16.
[g] Col. 1. 23.
[h] John 3. 18, 36. Acts 2. 38. & 16. 30, 31, 32. Rom. 10. 9. 1 Pet. 3. 21.
[i] John 12. 48.
[k] Luke 10. 17. Acts 5. 16. & 8. 7. & 16. 18. & 19. 12.
[l] Acts 2. 4. & 10. 46. & 19. 6. 1 Cor. 12. 10, 28.

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of our Lord St. Mark refers to in this verse. Probably either to that on the day of the Resurrection, when we may readily understand our Lord rebuking the eleven (who might be so called, even though St. Thomas was absent,) for not receiving the testimony of those who had already seen Him, or else to the appearance a week afterwards when all were present, in which case the upbraiding spoken of may refer to the doubt of St. Thomas.

15. "**And He said.**" We need not understand this to mean at the same time as the appearance named in the last verse. Perhaps from this verse to the end of the 18th is a sort of brief summary of our Lord's last discourse before His Ascension.

"**Go ye into all the world,**" &c. St. Matthew distinctly relates the similar command, given at the close of his Gospel, as spoken *in Galilee.* It is quite possible to suppose St. Mark is here summing up our Lord's sayings on various occasions during the great forty days, and so may be referring to the same command as St. Matthew, but it seems better to suppose that our Lord repeated the solemn missionary charge in slightly different words shortly before His Ascension.

"**Preach the gospel.**" Here our Lord points out the way in which the Apostles are to 'make disciples of all nations,' which is the literal meaning of the words "teach all nations" (St. Matt.). "Faith cometh "by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. x. 17.). The voice of the living messenger is to sound in all lands till "the earth shall be "full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Isai. xi. 9. Hab. ii. 14.).

16. **He that believeth and is baptized**" &c. The inward acceptance of the Gospel is not to be without the outward. Faith is not enough without sacramental grace. Indeed it is hard to see how any one can humbly and faithfully believe, and yet refuse so plain an ordinance of Christ as Baptism (See on St. Matt. iii. 17. St. John iii. 5.).

"**He that believeth not.**" Our Lord does not add 'and is not 'baptized,' because "unbelief—by which is meant the rejection of the "Gospel in heart and life, not weakness or doubt as in verse 14—"shall condemn a man, *whether baptized or unbaptized*" (*Alford.*).

17. "**These signs**" &c. Miraculous powers were largely conferred on the early Church for the confirmation of faith, and in witness of the divine origin of Christianity. Their end being accomplished, and

18 [m]they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; [n]they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. A.D. 30.

[m] Luke 10. 19. Acts 28. 5.
[n] Acts 5. 15, 16. & 9. 17. & 28. 8. James 5. 14, 15.

19 ¶ So then [o]after the Lord had spoken unto them, He was received up into heaven, and [p]sat on the right hand of God.

[o] Acts 1. 2, 3.
[p] Ps. 110. 1. Acts 7. 55.

20 ¶ And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with *them*, [q]and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

[q] Acts 5. 12. & 14. 3. 1 Cor. 2. 4, 5. Heb. 2. 4.

Christianity firmly planted in the world, they were gradually withdrawn.

18. "**Serpents.**" So St. Paul shook off the viper which had fastened on to his hand when shipwrecked on the island of Melita (Acts xxviii. 3—5.). We have no record in Scripture of any one "drinking any "deadly thing" without hurt, but there are stories of the sort in early times.

"**Lay hands on the sick.**" This was the usual sign of conferring a blessing: more often a spiritual blessing (See Acts viii. 17. xix. 6.); here a bodily blessing (See viii. 25.).

19. The Ascension.

St. Luke xxiv. 50, 51. Acts i. 9.

19. "**After the Lord had spoken unto them.**" It is more natural to suppose this to refer to the sayings of the verses before, as describing our Lord's last discourse with His disciples (See on 15.). Yet the words do not of necessity imply this, and might be suitably used by the Evangelist, even if the sayings he has just reported are gathered from various occasions, rather than spoken all at once just before the Ascension.

"**Sat on the right hand of God.**" That is, was exalted to the highest place of dignity and glory in heaven. He, who on earth had not where to lay His Head, entered His everlasting home, and sat upon the Throne as Judge and King until the end.

20. The Apostles going forth.

20. "**They went forth,**" &c. This verse may be regarded as a summary of the Acts of the Apostles. They diligently obey their Lord's command, and they experience the truth of the promise of His abiding presence with them.

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20. "*Amen.*" See on the last word of St. Matthew's Gospel.

THE GOSPEL

ACCORDING TO

SAINT LUKE.

COMMENTARY.

TITLE.

Saint Luke. Of St. Luke's history, except for the seasons during which he was the companion of St. Paul, scarcely anything is known. He was apparently of Gentile birth, for St. Paul in the salutations to the Colossians distinguishes between those who were "of the circum-"cision" (Col. iv. 11.) and those not, and places St. Luke among the latter, calling him "Luke, the beloved physician" (Col. iv. 14.), from which we learn what had been his former calling. He was the companion of St. Paul in his second missionary journey, from Troas (Acts xvi. 10.) as far as Philippi (Acts xvi. 12—17.). We can see at once where St. Luke formed one of St. Paul's party by his use of "we," instead of "they" or "he," in describing the travels. The Apostle of the Gentiles found St. Luke again at Philippi when, about five years afterwards, he was returning from his third missionary journey (Acts xx. 5, 6.), and they remained together till they reached Jerusalem (Acts xxi. 17.). Afterwards St. Luke joined St. Paul when he was sent as a prisoner to Rome, and shared in all the perils of his voyage (Acts xxvii. 1—xxviii. 16.). He remained with his friend in his imprisonment, as we learn from a passage already quoted (Col. iv. 14.), and was again with him some years afterwards in his last imprisonment, shortly before his death, when he alone seems to have dared to remain. On this occasion St. Paul mentions him together with his brother Evangelist St. Mark (2 Tim. iv. 11.). It is probable that St. Luke is meant by "the brother whose praise is "in the Gospel throughout all the churches" (2 Cor. viii. 18.), and that St. Paul calls him "true yoke-fellow" (Phil. iv. 3.). We thus see that St. Luke was the close friend, and very frequent companion, of St. Paul.

As St. Paul is the great Apostle of the Gentiles, so is St. Luke the great Evangelist of the Gentiles. He was not an eye-witness of what he relates, but gathered up, and arranged in order, the records of those who were. It is frequently said that, as St. Mark's Gospel owes much to St. Peter (See on Title "St. Mark"), so St. Luke's to St. Paul. This may probably be true, although St. Paul was no more an eye-witness than St. Luke, and both must have gathered their knowledge

of our Lord's life on earth from other sources. It is remarkable that St. Luke relates the institution of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper almost in the same words as St. Paul, and the latter declares that he received his account direct from Christ (1 Cor. xi. 23.).

It is generally believed that St. Luke's Gospel was written after those of St. Matthew and St. Mark; and as there is nothing in his Gospel to show that he had seen them, it is probable that it was written very shortly after. It was certainly written before the Acts of the Apostles, in the first verse of which it is referred to; and as that book carries the history of St. Paul only to the end of his two years' imprisonment in Rome,—that is, probably to the year 63 A.D.—we may fairly infer that the Gospel was written before that year. It appears not unlikely that St. Luke may have written his Gospel between the time when St. Paul left him at Philippi on his second missionary journey (probably A.D. 53.), and the time when he rejoined him at the same place in returning from his third missionary journey (probably A.D. 58.). There is nothing to lead us to suppose that St. Luke remained at Philippi during this long interval, though he possibly made it his chief place of abode; and he may not improbably have been in the Holy Land during that time gathering the materials for his Gospel.

The Gospel of St. Luke is the most complete of all, as we might expect from his express purpose of setting forth his history "*in order*" (i. 1.), and he gives the fullest account both of the Birth of our Lord and also of His Ascension.

St. Luke wrote his Gospel in Greek.

This Gospel, though doubtless intended principally for Gentile Christians, seems less exclusively so than St. Mark's, Hebrew expressions not being explained as in that Gospel; which may be very easily accounted for by the fact that at Philippi, as well as in the other Towns of Northern Greece, there were many Jews, so that Hebrew words and customs would be readily understood.

St. Luke is said by ancient Church historians to have laboured in Greece for many years, and to have died a natural death.

In the emblems of the four Evangelists (Rev. iv. 7.) St. Luke is thought to be represented by the Ox, or Calf, as setting forth Christ's Atonement through sacrifice. Our Lord appears in this Gospel as the great High Priest, winning, by His great sacrifice, mercy and pardon for sinners.

The Collect for St. Luke the Evangelist's Day.

ALMIGHTY God, who calledst Luke the Physician, whose praise is in the Gospel, to be an Evangelist, and Physician of the soul; May it please Thee, that, by the wholesome medicines of the doctrine delivered by him, all the diseases of our souls may be healed; through the merits of Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

CHAPTER I.

1 *The preface of Luke to his whole gospel.* 5 *The conception of John the Baptist,* 26 *and of Christ.* 39 *The prophecy of Elisabeth, and of Mary, concerning Christ.* 57 *The nativity and circumcision of John.* 67 *The prophecy of Zacharias, both of Christ,* 76 *and of John.*

FORASMUCH as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us,

2 [a] even as they delivered them unto us, which [b] from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word;

3 [c] it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee [d] in order, [e] most excellent Theophilus,

[a] Heb. 2. 3. 1 Pet. 5. 1. 2 Pet. 1. 16. 1 John 1. 1.
[b] Mark 1. 1. John 15. 27.
[c] Acts 15. 19, 25, 28. 1 Cor. 7. 40.
[d] Acts 11. 4.
[e] Acts 1. 1.

CHAPTER I.

1—4. Introduction.

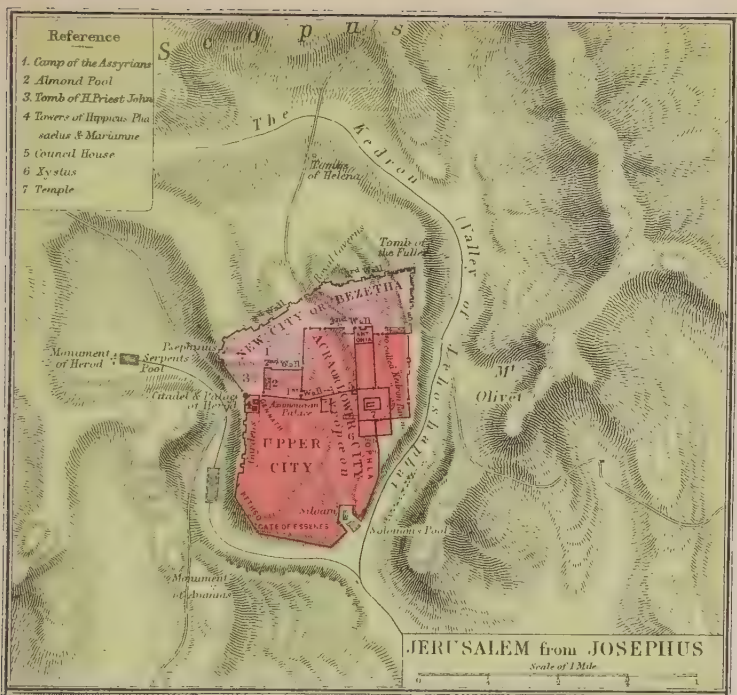
1. "Many." This does not refer to the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark, although these were probably already in existence, but rather to a variety of imperfect accounts of our Lord's words and acts, taken down from the lips of those who had been "eye-witnesses and ministers "of the word," but not yet gathered into a sufficiently complete and orderly history. It seems probable that St. Luke had not seen St. Matthew's or St. Mark's Gospel.

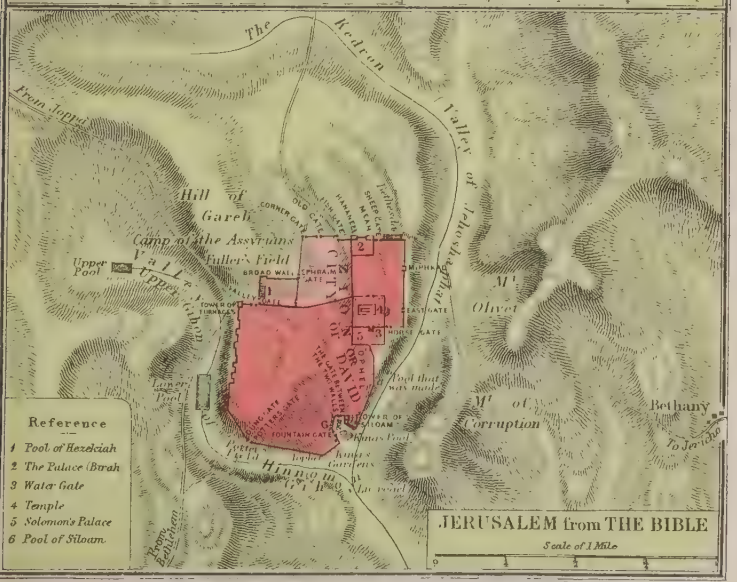
2. "Which from the beginning" &c. This refers to "they" not to "us," and would be more clear if placed immediately after the "they," thus:—'even as they, which from the beginning were eye-'witnesses and ministers of the word delivered them unto us.' The "eye-witnesses" were the Apostles, and others who had known our Lord, a privilege St. Luke did not possess.

3. "Having had perfect understanding." This would be more exactly translated, 'having carefully traced out.' This no doubt St. Luke did by enquiring from various eye-witnesses, whose accounts he has, under the guidance of the Spirit of truth, cast into an orderly history.

"In order." This gives St. Luke's design—that, namely, of supplying a full and orderly history of our Lord.

"Theophilus." There is no doubt that this was a *person*, although the name means 'Beloved of God,' and has by some been understood as a general address to all Christian readers. The word translated "most "excellent" is the same which St. Paul uses in addressing the Roman governors Felix and Festus, where it is translated "most noble"; and from its use here we may probably gather that Theophilus was a person of some rank and importance, though it should be noticed that St. Luke omits the word in his opening of the Acts of the Apostles. Of course,





Stanford's Geogl Estabt.

4 [f]that thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.

[f] John 20. 31.

5 ¶ THERE was [g]in the days of Herod, the king of Judæa, a certain priest named Zacharias, [h]of the course of Abia: and his wife *was* of the daughters of Aaron, and her name *was* Elisabeth.

The sixth year before the common date called Anno Domini 1.

[g] Matt. 2. 1.

[h] 1 Chron. 24. 10, 19. Neh. 12. 4, 17.

6 And they were both [i]righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

[i] Gen. 7. 1. & 17. 1. 1 Kin. 9. 4. 2 Kin. 20. 3. Job 1. 1. Acts 23. 1. & 24. 16. Phil. 3. 6.

7 And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were *now* well stricken in years.

8 And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God [k]in the order of his course,

[k] 1 Chron. 24. 19. 2 Chron. 8. 14. & 31. 2.

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although addressed to one particular person, St. Luke meant his Gospel for the Church at large. In these days books, meant for all, are frequently dedicated to some one person.

4. "Instructed." Literally, 'catechized' or instructed orally—that is, by word of mouth. Theophilus was evidently a convert to Christianity, and had been orally taught the truths of his adopted faith. The Evangelist would provide for him, and for all such, a *written* record to perpetuate, and secure from error, the oral teaching. This is one great object of the Holy Spirit in the fourfold Gospel record.

5—25. Announcement of the birth of St. John the Baptist.

5. "Herod." This was Herod the Great (See on St. Matt. ii. 1.).

"Of the course of Abia." The descendants of Aaron in the time of King David consisted of twenty-four families, and by the king's order (1 Chron. xxiv.) these families provided for the Temple services in turn, each undertaking them for a week. After the captivity only four of these families returned (Ezra ii. 36—39.), but these were again divided up into twenty-four, with the original names, so that the courses remained as before.

"Of the daughters of Aaron." The priestly families kept themselves very distinct, and did not intermarry much with others. Thus St. John the Baptist was, both by father and by mother, of the priestly race; and this was the only nobility among the Jews.

6. "Commandments and ordinances." These have been understood to mean the moral and ceremonial commands of the Law. When any are spoken of as "righteous" and "blameless," we must not understand it as meaning 'perfect,' but as having attained to such holiness as fallen human nature can by God's grace attain to.

7. "Well stricken." That is, 'far advanced.'

9 according to the custom of the priest's office,
[1] Ex. 30. 7, 8. 1 Sam. 2. 28. 1 Chron. 23. 13. 2 Chron. 29. 11. his lot was [1] to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.

10 [m] And the whole multitude of the people were
[m] Lev. 16. 17. Rev. 8. 3, 4. praying without at the time of incense.

11 And there appeared unto him an angel of the
[n] Ex. 30. 1. Lord standing on the right side of [n] the altar of incense.

12 And when Zacharias saw *him*, [o] he was trou-
[o] ver. 29. Judg. 6. 22. & 13. 22. Dan. 10. 8. ch. 2. 9. Acts 10. 4. Rev. 1. 17. bled, and fear fell upon him.

13 But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Za-
[p] ver. 60, 63. charias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and [p] thou shalt call his name John.

14 And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and
[q] ver. 58. [q] many shall rejoice at his birth.

15 For he shall be great in the sight of the

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9. "**His lot was**" &c. There being several priests of each family or course, the burning of incense, which was the most honourable of the priestly duties, was assigned to one of the number by lot. The incense was burnt morning and evening (Ex. xxx. 7, 8.), and was an emblem of prayer going up as a sweet savour before God (Compare Rev. viii. 3, 4.).

10. "**The whole multitude.**" It is supposed from this that the day was the sabbath, or some high day.

11. "**On the right side of the altar.**" The altar of incense stood inside the Holy Place, which none but the priests were permitted to enter. Beyond this again was the Holy of Holies, into which no one went except the High-priest once a year on the great Day of Atonement (See Heb. ix. 2—4.). The Table of Show-bread and the Golden Candlestick stood one on each side of the altar of incense.

13. "**Thy prayer is heard.**" Zacharias had therefore prayed for a child. Possibly, being now old, he may have ceased to offer this prayer, thinking it was God's will not to grant it. But God may give us our heart's desire, when we least expect it; and prayers, which seemed in vain, may find their answer at last. Thus "men ought "always to pray, and not to faint" (xviii. 1.).

"**John.**" This name means 'The Lord is gracious,' and we can hardly believe that God would have specially revealed the name unless its meaning were intended to convey some truth or lesson.

14. "**Many shall rejoice at his birth.**" This need not be confined to the "neighbours" and "cousins" who rejoiced at his birth (58.), but may also be spoken of the many who should have cause for joy in his birth, being brought to repentance and salvation through him. The Church keeps the Feast of the *Birth* of St. John the Baptist, most other Saints-days being kept on the supposed days of the *death* of those they commemorate.

Lord, and [r] shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, [s] even from his mother's womb.

[r] Num. 6. 3. Judg. 13. 4. ch. 7. 33.
[s] Jer. 1. 5. Gal. 1. 15.

16 And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God.

17 [t] And he shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias, **to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,** and the disobedient [2] to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

[t] Matt. 18. 14. Mark 9. 12.
[2] Or, *by.*
Mal. 4. 6.

18 And Zacharias said unto the angel, [u] Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years.

[u] Gen. 17. 17.

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15. "Shall drink" &c. This was a vow taken by the Nazarites,—a society of men who dedicated themselves to God's service, and led a very strict life (See Num. vi. 2—5.).

"Filled with the Holy Ghost." We may compare this verse with St. Paul's words, "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be "filled with the Spirit" (Eph. v. 18.).

"Even from his mother's womb." So do we believe that God bestows the Holy Spirit upon little children brought to Him in Baptism, to be their Guide and Sanctifier from the very first.

17. "Before Him." Literally this must mean "the Lord their God" spoken of in the verse before. But, as it is certainly said of Christ, before whom St. John the Baptist went as Forerunner, we see that St. Luke speaks of Christ as the Lord God.

"In the spirit and power of Elias." St. John the Baptist resembled the prophet Elijah both in his spirit of self-denying severity and in the power with which he roused the people to repentance (See on St. Matt. xi. 14.).

"To turn the hearts" &c. In the prophet Malachi the words are, "He shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart "of the children to their fathers": that is, 'he shall draw together in 'bonds of loving unity those whom sin and selfishness had severed.' The Angel however alters the second part of the sentence, thus showing what is required to understand the prophet aright, namely, that this drawing of father to child and child to father is in reality a drawing of the wicked to the good. Some have seen in the fact that the Angel only speaks of the turning of the "*fathers to the children*" a declaration that those under the old covenant—"the fathers"—should be turned to those under the new—"the children"; or, in other words, that St. John the Baptist should be the link between the Law and the Gospel.

"The Lord." That is, our blessed Saviour, whom the Angel Gabriel acknowledges as 'Lord.'

18. "Whereby shall I know this?" It is said of Abraham, when he was promised a son in his old age, that, "being not weak in faith,"... "he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief" (Rom. iv. 19, 20.). Zacharias was weak in faith, and so staggered at the promise, and questioned. The Virgin Mary also questioned as to the manner (34.), but doubted not as to the fact.

19 And the angel answering said unto him, I am
y Dan. 8. 16. & 9. 21, 22, 23. Matt. 18. 10. Heb. 1. 14. [y] Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings.

z Ezek. 3. 26. & 24. 27. 20 And, behold, [z] thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season.

21 And the people waited for Zacharias, and marvelled that he tarried so long in the temple.

22 And when he came out, he could not speak unto them: and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple: for he beckoned unto them, and remained speechless.

a See 2 Kin. 11. 5. 1 Chron. 9. 25. 23 And it came to pass, that, as soon as [a] the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own house.

24 And after those days his wife Elisabeth conceived, and hid herself five months, saying,

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19. "**I am Gabriel,**" &c. This is said to show Zacharias the sin and folly of his doubts. Gabriel was the Angel sent to show Daniel the time of the coming of the Messiah (Dan. viii. 16. ix. 21.).

"**That stand**" ... "**and am sent.**" Thus does the heavenly Messenger declare the twofold occupation of angelic beings. At one time they are rapt in blissful adoration; at another speeding on messages of mercy. The Seraphim, which Isaiah saw, had each one "six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered "his feet"—this was blessed adoration—, "and with twain he did fly"—this was active service.

20. "**Thou shalt be dumb,**" &c. We find (See 62.) that Zacharias was struck deaf as well as dumb. The voice of the Law is silenced as the first notes of the voice of the Gospel are sounded.

"**Because thou believest not**" &c. Zacharias was struck dumb partly as a punishment for his doubts, but partly also to prove to him the truth of the Angel's words. Thus does God frequently unite chastisement and instruction.

21. "**The people waited.**" It is doubtful whether it was the duty of the same priest who burnt incense to come forth and pronounce the blessing, for which it has been supposed the people were waiting. It is quite sufficient to know that the priest came forth from the holy place after fulfilling his office, and that Zacharias remained much longer within the veil than was usual (See on 11.).

22. "**They perceived that he had seen a vision.**" By the signs he made, and his unusual manner and look.

23. "**As soon as the days**" &c. Thus Zacharias, though deaf and dumb, still continued to fulfil his priestly duties for the remainder of his week (See on 5.).

24. "**Hid herself.**" Possibly giving herself to much prayer and

25 Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the [b] days wherein He looked on *me*, to [b] take away my reproach among men.

[b] Gen. 30. 23. Isai. 4. 1. & 54. 1, 4.

26 ¶ And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth,

The sixth year before the common date called Anno Domini 1.

27 to a virgin [c] espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name *was* Mary.

[c] Matt. 1. 18. ch. 2. 4, 5.

28 And the angel came in unto her, and said, [d] Hail, *thou that art* [2] highly favoured, [e] the Lord *is* with thee: blessed *art* thou among women.

[d] Dan. 9. 23. & 10. 19.

[2] Or, *graciously accepted*, or, *much graced*: See ver. 30.

29 And when she saw *him*, [f] she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.

[e] Judg. 6. 12.

30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: [f] ver. 12. for thou hast found favour with God.

31 [g] And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a Son, and [h] shalt call His name JESUS.

[g] Isai. 7. 14. Matt. 1. 21. [h] ch. 2. 21.

32 He shall be great, [i] and shall be called the Son

[i] Mark 5. 7.

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meditation, as one singled out by God for a special blessing. This seems almost implied in the next verse, as though the marvellous dealing of God with her were the reason for her retirement.

25. "**My reproach.**" That is, the reproach of barrenness, always regarded as an affliction by Jewish wives.

26—38. The Annunciation.

26. "**In the sixth month.**" That is, after the event last recorded, namely the conception of Elisabeth. The twenty-fifth of March is observed by the Church as the day of the Annunciation.

"**Nazareth.**" A poor and despised town in Galilee, itself a despised district (See on St. Matt. ii. 23.).

28. "**The angel came in.**" The Virgin Mary was then in some private chamber, and possibly, as she is commonly represented in pictures of the Annunciation, engaged in devotion.

"**Highly favoured.**" The only other place where the same Greek word which is thus translated is used is in Eph. i. 6, where it is translated "accepted." The reading in the margin here —"graciously "accepted"—expresses the meaning well.

29. "**Troubled.**" Not with doubts or unbelief, but with confusion at the honour bestowed on her, and with wonder as to its nature, and as to the meaning of the heavenly salutation.

30. "**Fear not, Mary.**" See how another Mary was comforted by the speaking of her name (St. John xx. 16.).

32. "**Shall be called.**" This expression seems in Scriptural usage

of the Highest: and [k] the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David:

33 [l] and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end.

34 Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?

35 And the angel answered and said unto her, [m] The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy Thing which shall be born of thee shall be called [n] the Son of God.

36 And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren.

37 For [o] with God nothing shall be impossible.

[k] 2 Sam. 7. 11. 12. Ps. 132. 11. Isai. 9. 6, 7. & 16. 5. Jer. 23. 5. Rev. 3. 7.
[l] Dan. 2. 44. & 7. 14. 27. Obad. 21. Micah 4. 7. John 12. 34. Heb. 1. 8.
[m] Mat. 1. 20.
[n] Mat. 14. 33. & 26. 63, 64. Mark 1. 1. John 1. 34. & 20. 31. Acts 8. 37. Rom. 1. 4.
[o] Gen. 18. 14. Jer. 32. 17. Zech. 8. 6. Mat. 19. 26. Mark 10. 27. ch. 18. 27. Rom. 4. 21.

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to imply more than the mere words express (See on St. Matt. v. 9. and compare 35 and 36.). The Angel declares that the Child shall be, and shall be acknowledged to be, the Son of the Most High God (See viii. 28. where the devils thus acknowledge Him.).

32. "**The throne of His father David:**" &c. The Angel is here referring to the great prophecy of the Birth of Christ by Isaiah (ix. 6, 7.), where we read, "Of the increase of His government and peace there "shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to "order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from "henceforth even for ever." The kingdom of Christ was to be set up first among the Jews, and though as a nation they have rebelled against their true King, yet His kingdom is for ever, for it is "not of this world," and into it the nations are gathered, "until the fulness of the Gentiles "be come in." And then "all Israel shall be saved" (Rom. xi. 25, 26.). From the words "His father David," we may be sure that the Virgin Mary was "of the house of David," as well as Joseph.

34. "**How shall this be.**" Not spoken in doubt, but in wonder (See on 18.).

35. "**The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee,**" &c. This is the answer to the question of the verse before, and declares the miracle by which a virgin should conceive and bear a Child (See on St. Matt. i. 23.). The Church has always embodied in her creeds the truth that the ever-blessed Son of God was "conceived by the Holy Ghost." And thus we plead with Him in our beautiful Litany, saying, "By the "mystery of Thy holy Incarnation." When Christ was pleased to take to Himself our nature that He might become Man and suffer and die for us, He entered not that nature as others do. He entered it by a miracle and a mystery.

36. "**Behold, thy cousin Elisabeth,**" &c. Thus a sign, though unasked, is given to the blessed Virgin. She was probably not aware of all that had happened to her kinswoman Elizabeth, and the Angel informs her of this to confirm her own faith in the more marvellous blessing bestowed upon herself.

38 And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

39 ¶ And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, [p] into a city of Juda;
40 and entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth.

[p] Josh. 21. 9, 10, 11.

41 And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost:
42 and she spake out with a loud voice, and said, [q] Blessed *art* thou among women, and blessed *is* the Fruit of thy womb.
43 And whence *is* this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

[q] ver. 28. Judg. 5. 24.

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38. "Behold the handmaid of the Lord." These are words of lowly and entire submission to the will of God. The holy Virgin receives the most exalted of blessings in no other way than she would have received the bitterest of afflictions; because her one thought is to cast herself into God's Hands as the passive instrument of His will. A very great blessing is received by a humble Christian almost with as great fear and awe as a very great woe. The first thought, when it comes, should be, 'May it be to His glory whose will has thus ordained.'

39—56. The visit of the Virgin Mary to Elizabeth.

39. "A city of Juda." Hebron, which was one of the cities "in the "mountains" allotted to the tribe of Judah (Josh. xv. 48 and 54.), is by an old tradition said to be the city here spoken of as the home of Zacharias and Elizabeth. This region was about a hundred miles distant from Nazareth. The visit of Mary to Elizabeth was probably for the sake of taking "sweet counsel together" concerning the wonderful revelations made to them.

41. "The babe leaped" &c. Thus the Forerunner, yet unborn, acknowledged the presence of his yet unborn Lord. And God at the same time filled Elizabeth with the Holy Ghost, inspiring her both to understand aright the movement of the child in her womb and to salute her highly-favoured kinswoman in the words which follow.

42. "Blessed art thou" &c. Mary had not told Elizabeth of the wonderful event which had happened to her. Elizabeth knew it by the power of the Holy Ghost, which became the Spirit of prophecy within her.

"The Fruit of thy womb." That is, "that holy Thing which shall "be born of thee" (35), the everblessed Son of God, who, though "very "and eternal God," yet "took man's nature in the womb of the blessed "Virgin, of her substance," and thus was very God, and very Man (See Art. ii.).

43. "Whence is this to me," &c. Elizabeth, though the older of the

44 For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy.

45 And blessed *is* she [2]that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord.

46 And Mary said, [r]My soul doth magnify the Lord,

[2] Or, *which believed that there.*

[r] 1 Sam. 2. 1. Ps. 34. 2, 3. & 35. 9. Hab. 3. 18.

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two, and as a married woman the superior, yet, knowing the wonderful honour bestowed on Mary, feels herself unworthy to receive one so highly favoured. That she had a clear insight given her into the blessedness of Mary's state is shown by her calling her "the mother of "my Lord." Faith discerns the presence of Christ, where sight is helpless.

45. "Blessed is she that believed." We can hardly doubt that Elizabeth in uttering these inspired words must have felt their contrast with the different sentence pronounced upon Zacharias for his doubting. Mark how completely she speaks in the spirit of inspired prophecy, when she declares the fulfilment of the things told to Mary from the Lord. Mary did not need this assurance, yet it would help to strengthen her under the burden of a bliss almost beyond belief.

46. "And Mary said." Zacharias doubted, and was dumb. Mary believed, and broke forth into that glorious hymn of praise so familiar to us all in the constant use of it by the Church, which we know as the "Magnificat," that being the first word of it in the Latin translation.

THE "MAGNIFICAT," or Song of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

"My soul doth magnify the Lord," &c. This "Song of the blessed "Virgin Mary" bears a great resemblance to the Song of Hannah upon the birth of Samuel (1 Sam. ii. 1—10.). It is also framed upon the model of the Psalms, the great book of Jewish devotion.

"Throughout this hymn we are to hear the voice, not merely of the "Virgin Mary celebrating the praises of Him who had so magnified her, "but of the whole Church, of whom she was a type, giving thanks for "the mystery of the Incarnation and the blessings of the Gospel. And "it is on this account,—namely because the blessed Mary here speaks "in the person of the Church,—that this hymn has been, from very "early times, used in the public services of Christians.

"Go forth therefore, Christian soul, and magnify the Lord, and "rejoice in God thy Saviour! But remember that, if thou wouldest "thank God worthily for His mercy to the humble, thou must be very "careful to be thyself humble.

"Joy and thankfulness do not necessarily lead to pride and self-"exaltation; for, as we see in this hymn of the Virgin, there may be "simple joy in God, unsullied by any thought of self. She forgets "every thing else in the contemplation of God's exceeding goodness. "Do thou, whenever thou takest on thy lips the words of her hymn "of praise, whisper a secret prayer that God would give thee something "of her spirit—the spirit of lowliness and thankful joy" (*P. Young.*).

47 and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

48 For [s] He hath regarded the low estate of His handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth [t] all generations shall call me blessed.

49 For He that is mighty [u] hath done to me great things; and [x] holy *is* His name.

50 And [y] His mercy *is* on them that fear Him from generation to generation.

51 [z] He hath shewed strength with His arm; [a] He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

52 [b] He hath put down the mighty from *their* seats, and exalted them of low degree.

53 [c] He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich He hath sent empty away.

54 He hath holpen His servant Israel, [d] in remembrance of *His* mercy;

[s] 1 Sam. 1. 11. Ps. 138. 6.
[t] Mal. 3. 12. ch. 11. 27.
[u] Ps. 71. 19. & 126. 2, 3.
[x] Ps. 111. 9.
[y] Gen. 17. 7. Ex. 20. 6. Ps. 103. 17, 18.
[z] Ps. 98. 1. & 118. 15. Isai. 40. 10. & 51. 9. & 52. 10.
[a] Ps. 33. 10. 1 Pet. 5. 5.
[b] 1 Sam. 2. 6, &c. Job 5. 11. Ps. 113. 6.
[c] 1 Sam. 2. 5. Ps. 34. 10.
[d] Ps. 98. 3. Jer. 31. 3, 20.

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47. "God my Saviour." Not, as some have supposed, referring to the Child who was to be born to save His people from their sins, but spoken, in the more simple sense, of God the Father, who was indeed raising up a mighty salvation for her. We may note that St. Paul speaks of God the Father as "our Saviour" in one verse, and God the Son as "our Saviour" in the next (See Titus i. 3, 4.).

48. "The low estate." The blessed Virgin was poor and lowly in her worldly condition (See on ii. 7. and 24.). It may be well to mention here that the reason why the Prayer-book version of this hymn, and of those of Zacharias and of Simeon, differs in some few words (as here "lowliness" for "low estate") from the Bible is that all passages of Scripture quoted in the Prayer-book were, like the Psalms, taken from an older translation than that of our present Bible. When this latter was made, it was not thought well to alter the Prayer-book version, except in the case of the Epistles and Gospels, because the people were so familiar with the words that the change would have been unwelcome to them.

"Shall call me blessed." She is, in fulfilment of her own words, continually called the "*blessed*" Virgin Mary (See on xi. 27, 28.).

51. "He hath shewed strength" &c. This God did by His Son. Mary speaks, as is common in prophecy, of God's purposes as though already fulfilled. God's "Arm" is used for His power, as in Isai. liii. 1, where the prophet, foretelling the general unbelief in Christ, asks, "To whom is the Arm of the Lord revealed?" The "proud," the "mighty" (52), and the "rich" (53), are the Scribes and Pharisees, the Chief-priests and Rulers of the people; together with all in all ages who have been, like them, proud and self-reliant. Some have in these words seen a prophecy of the victory of Christ over the powers of darkness.

54. "Holpen." This is only an old English form of the word 'helped,'

e Gen. 17. 19. Ps. 132. 11. Rom. 11. 28. Gal. 3. 16.

55 e as He spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever.

56 And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house.

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57 ¶ Now Elisabeth's full time came that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son.

58 And her neighbours and her cousins heard how the Lord had shewed great mercy upon her; and f they rejoiced with her.

f ver. 14.

g Gen. 17. 12. Lev. 12. 3.

59 And it came to pass, that g on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father.

h ver. 13.

60 And his mother answered and said, h Not *so;* but he shall be called John.

61 And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name.

62 And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called.

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55. "To Abraham, and to his seed for ever." These words follow the word "mercy," and not "spake." The sense is—'In remembrance 'of His mercy to Abraham and to his seed for ever, as He spake to 'our fathers.' By "our fathers" are meant the "holy prophets, which "have been since the world began" (70.). When the blessed Virgin spoke of the "seed" of Abraham, she probably had chiefly in view the mercies of God to His chosen people Israel (See on 32.): but her words bear their fullest and truest meaning when applied to the *spiritual* seed, or family, of Abraham, for "they which are of faith, the same are the "children of Abraham" (Gal. iii. 7.).

56. "Returned to her own house." The holy Virgin had not yet told Joseph, to whom she was espoused, the great secret of the Angel's visit. She left that to be revealed as God willed. So Joseph's trouble and the Angel's visit to him (as related in St. Matt. i. 18—21.) must be placed at some period *after* her return to Nazareth.

57—80. The Birth of St. John the Baptist.

59. "The eighth day." The day appointed according to God's command to Abraham (Gen. x. 12.), and the Law of Moses (Lev. xii. 3.). Our blessed Lord was also circumcised on the eighth day (ii. 21.). A strong argument for Infant Baptism may be drawn from the fact that under the older Law infants of eight days old were brought into covenant with God. Surely the Gospel would not shut out where the Law opened. (See more fully on this point on St. Mark x. 14.)

"They called him." Literally, 'They were calling him.' They had not actually given the name, but were intending to do so. This does not include Elizabeth, who knew that the Angel had determined the name of the child (13.), as we learn from the next verse.

62. "They made signs." Plainly because Zacharias was deaf as well as dumb.

63 And he asked for a writing table, and wrote, saying, [i] His name is John. And they marvelled all.

64 [k] And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue *loosed*, and he spake, and praised God.

65 And fear came on all that dwelt round about them: and all these [2] sayings were noised abroad throughout all [1] the hill country of Judæa.

66 And all they that heard *them* [m] laid *them* up in their hearts, saying, What manner of child shall this be! And [n] the hand of the Lord was with him.

67 And his father Zacharias [o] was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying,

68 [p] Blessed *be* the Lord God of Israel; for [q] He hath visited and redeemed His people,

[i] ver. 13.
[k] ver. 20.
[2] Or, *things*.
[1] ver. 39.
[m] ch. 2. 19, 51.
[n] Gen. 39. 2. Ps. 80. 17. & 89. 21. Acts 11. 21.
[o] Joel 2. 28.
[p] 1 Kings 1. 48. Ps. 41. 13. & 72. 18. & 106. 48.
[q] Ex. 3. 16. & 4. 31. Ps. 111. 9. ch. 7. 16.

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63. "A writing table." Or rather 'a writing-*tablet*,' "table" being used here, as when we speak of the two "tables of stone" on which the Commandments were written, of a flat surface. The writing-tablets used by the ancients were flat pieces of wood or metal thinly coated with wax, on which they wrote with a sharp-pointed iron pen.

"They marvelled all." Of course the friends and relatives did not know that the name John had been divinely revealed to Zacharias, and they were astonished that both he and his wife should fix on a name borne by no member of the family.

64. "His mouth was opened." We thus learn the exact meaning of the Angel's words, "until the day that these things shall be performed" (20.). The things the Angel had spoken were not performed until the name was given, for that formed part of the Angel's message (13.).

65. "And fear" &c. In this and the next verse St. Luke is describing the effect of the wonderful events he has recorded. Fear is natural to man when brought close to the unseen world. There is something awful in an event in which the Hand of God is plainly manifested.

67. "His father Zacharias" &c. Probably, as is generally understood, on the day of the Circumcision of his son, St. Luke returning to that day after describing briefly the effect of the events upon the hearers, and still more briefly the Divine guardianship exercised over the child in the words, "the Hand of the Lord was with him." Zacharias was "filled with the Holy Ghost," a special outpouring of the Divine Spirit being bestowed upon him, as a pledge that his doubting, of which we may be sure he had deeply repented, was forgiven, and also to inspire him with the noble song of thanksgiving which follows.

"Prophesied." Probably here used in its broader and commoner sense in the New Testament, of inspired utterance, rather than in its narrower sense of the foretelling of future events.

The "Benedictus," or Song of Zacharias.

68. "Blessed be the Lord God" &c. The Song of Zacharias naturally divides itself into two parts, the first (68—75), praising God for the

r Ps. 132. 17.
s Jer. 23. 5, 6. & 30. 10. Dan. 9. 24. Acts 3. 21. Rom. 1. 2.
t ver. 54. Lev. 26. 42. Ps. 98. 3. & 105. 8, 9. & 106. 45. Ezek. 16. 60.
u Gen. 12. 3. & 17. 4. & 22. 16, 17. Heb. 6. 13, 17.
x Rom. 6. 18, 22. Heb. 9. 14.
y Jer. 32. 39, 40. Eph. 4. 24. 2 Thes. 2. 13. 2 Tim. 1. 9. Titus 2. 12. 1 Pet. 1. 15. 2 Pet. 1. 4.

69 r and hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David;

70 s as He spake by the mouth of His holy prophets, which have been since the world began:

71 that we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us;

72 t to perform the mercy *promised* to our fathers, and to remember His holy covenant;

73 u the oath which He sware to our father Abraham,

74 that He would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might x serve Him without fear,

75 y in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our life.

76 And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet

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salvation, which in the spirit of prophecy he speaks of as already come (See on 51.); the second (76—79), declaring the part which the child so wonderfully given to him should bear in the working out of that salvation.

"Visited and redeemed." Whether Zacharias had a clear perception of the full meaning of these his words we know not. To *us* they speak of the deepest and grandest truths of our holy faith—the Incarnation and the Atonement. God "visited" His people, when the eternal Son "took man's nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin" (Art. ii.). He "redeemed" them when that Incarnate Son "gave Himself a ran-"som for all" (1 Tim. ii. 6.).

69. "An horn of salvation." This is a Hebrew expression, meaning, as in our Prayer-book version (See on 48.), "a mighty salvation." The same expression occurs in the Psalms (xviii. 2.). Of course Zacharias uses these words of Christ, not of John.

71. "Enemies." The enemies from whom Christ saves us are the world the flesh and the devil. They "that hate us" are those evil beings who seek the hurt of our souls.

74. "That we being delivered" &c. Thus the salvation which Christ brings is salvation, not from the guilt and punishment only, but also from the bondage and power, of our sins (See on St. Matt. i. 21.). Thus too does St. Paul speak, "The grace of God that bringeth salvation "hath appeared to all men, teaching us" not that we may obtain pardon for our sins only, but—"that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, "we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Tit. ii. 11, 12.).

75. "Holiness and righteousness." "Holiness" implies the inward state of purity and piety; "righteousness" the careful observance of God's laws.

76. "And thou, child, &c." Zacharias now addresses his song to his own unconscious infant; and yet he dwells not on the mercies shown to

of the Highest: for [z] thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways;

77 to give knowledge of salvation unto His people [a 2] by the remission of their sins,

78 through the [3] tender mercy of our God; whereby the [4] dayspring from on high hath visited us,

79 [b] to give light to them that sit in darkness and *in* the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

80 And [c] the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and [d] was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel.

[z] ver. 17. Isai. 40. 3. Mal. 3. 1. & 4. 5. Matt. 11. 10.
[a] Mark 1. 4. ch. 3. 3.
[2] Or, *for.*
[3] Or, *bowels of the mercy.*
[4] Or, *sunrising*, or, *branch*, Num. 24. 17. Isai. 11. 1. Zech. 3. 8. & 6. 12. Mal. 4. 2.
[b] Isai. 9. 2. & 42. 7. & 49. 9. Matt. 4. 16. Acts 26. 18.
[c] ch. 2. 40. [d] Matt. 3. 1. & 11. 7.

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himself, but upon those in store for all God's people, of which his son was to give the knowledge.

"Before the face of the Lord." That is, the Lord Jesus Christ (See on 17.), whose Fore-runner John the Baptist was to be. Doubtless Zacharias knew that in his son was to be fulfilled the prophecy of Malachi (iii. 1.) "Behold, I will send My messenger, and he shall prepare "the way before Me."

77. "By the remission of their sins." This may be equally well translated '*in* the remission of their sins,' and describes that in which the salvation consisted, and which it was John the Baptist's special office to proclaim. Yet that "remission of sins" is not the *whole* of "salvation", but only one part of it, we have seen in this same song of praise (See on 74.).

78. "The Dayspring." A title of Christ, who is in like manner called the "Morning Star" (Rev. xxii. 16.), and the "Sun of righteous-"ness" (Mal. iv. 2.). Well may we marvel, with David of old, at that love which led the God, who made the moon and the stars, to visit man! (See Ps. viii. 3, 4.).

79. "Darkness and the shadow of death." A most frequent and natural figure for ignorance and sin. As the sun-rise over the mountains disperses the mists, and lights up all the low dim valleys, so Christ disperses the mists of error, and drives out all ignorance and sin, in the hearts on which His true light shines.

80. "The child grew, and waxed strong in spirit." It is very remarkable that precisely the same words are used of the Infant Christ (ii. 40.), who thus showed Himself very Man, consenting to grow in Body and in Spirit, even as one of His creatures.

"In the deserts." We need not suppose that this means from his very infancy, nor that, when "in the deserts," he lived in entire solitude. Probably from his youth "till the day of his showing unto Israel," which was not till he was thirty years old, he lived in great retirement, leading a life of great self-denial and devotion, and avoiding all needless intercourse with others. He was a Nazarite from his birth, according to the word of the Angel (See on 15.). May we not gather from this long retirement of John the Baptist a lesson as to the patient

The fourth year before the common date called Anno Domini 1.

CHAPTER II.

1 *Augustus taxeth all the Roman empire.* 6 *The nativity of Christ.* 8 *One angel relateth it to the shepherds:* 13 *many sing praises to God for it.* 21 *Christ is circumcised.* 22 *Mary purified.* 28 *Simeon and Anna prophesy of Christ:* 40 *who increaseth in wisdom,* 46 *questioneth in the temple with the doctors,* 51 *and is obedient to His parents.*

AND it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that
2 Or, *enrolled.* all the world should be [2]taxed.
a Acts 5. 37. 2 ([a]*And* this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)

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care and training and self-discipline with which those who seek the sacred office of the ministry should prepare themselves for their holy work?

CHAPTER II.

1—7. The Birth of our Lord.

St. Matt. i. 18—25.

1. "Cæsar Augustus." The Roman emperor at that time. 'Cæsar' was the general title of all the Roman emperors, and 'Augustus' was the title given by the Roman senate (or parliament) to this Cæsar. Other emperors however adopted this honourable name, as Nero (See on Acts xxv. 21.).

"That all the world should be taxed." "All the world" was the expression in use to signify the whole Roman empire, the Romans being at that time masters of all the known world. The word translated "taxed" would be more correctly translated 'enrolled,' as in the margin. The emperor had ordered a census to be taken of all countries under the Roman power.

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2. "*This taxing was first made*" &c. Cyrenius (or Quirinus, as his name is in the Latin form,) seems to have been governor of Syria for a few years just before the birth of Christ, and again ten or eleven years afterwards. It is known that a census of the province of Syria (of which Judæa then formed a part) was made at this latter time, and this is the "taxing" referred to by Gamaliel (Acts v. 37.) as the occasion of certain disturbances. What then is the meaning of this much-disputed verse? Two explanations may be given as satisfactory. 1. St. Luke may refer to the census itself taken at the time of our Lord's Birth, and this (the *first* census of the Jews taken under Roman authority) may have been made under the direction of Cyrenius as governor of Syria. Judæa was not at that time a Roman province, but was governed by Herod, who however was under the power, and supported by the authority, of the Roman emperor. It is however very possible that Cyrenius may have had the general management of the census in that part of the Roman dominion, Herod being required to make the return so far as regarded his own kingdom. There is no reason to suppose any money payment was exacted at the time of the enrolment of the names. 2. Another view, which has been widely received, would refer this verse to the *completion* of the census when Cyrenius was governor ten or eleven years later, or to its enforcement for the purpose of taxation. It is quite possible a beginning may have been made, in obedience to the emperor's decree, at the time of our Lord's Birth, but that the work may have been interrupted—perhaps by the death of Herod the Great, which took place very shortly afterwards—for some years, and resumed and completed by Cyrenius when again governor of Syria. This will be the more probable if we suppose that the census was undertaken by Cyrenius himself during his first government of Syria, and dropped when he left. Meanwhile Herod had died, his son and successor Archelaus had been banished by the Romans, and

3 And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judæa, unto [b] the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; ([c] because he was of the house and lineage of David:)

5 to be taxed with Mary [d] his espoused wife, being great with child.

6 And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

7 And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him

[b] 1 Sam. 16. 1, 4. John 7. 42.
[c] Matt. 1. 16. ch. 1. 27.
[d] ch. 1. 27.

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3. "And all went to be taxed," &c. This would not be the Roman way of taking the census, but would be very natural to the Jews, who were very careful as to their family lines, or genealogies. The Jews were at this time governed by a king of their own (See on St. Matt. ii. 1.), who, though under the power of Rome, would doubtless carry out the emperor's order for the census in the manner most acceptable to the Jews, that is, by having everyone enrolled in the place to which his family belonged. How little did the emperor who ordered the census, or the king who enforced it, suspect that he was helping to accomplish the fore-ordained and foretold purposes of God as to the place of the Saviour's Birth.

4. "From Galilee," &c. The distance from Nazareth in Galilee to Bethlehem in Judæa was about seventy miles, and the journey was probably made on foot.

"House and lineage." That is, 'family and line of descent.'

5. "With Mary." It was not compulsory upon women to appear personally in order to be enrolled in the census, either by Roman or by Jewish law. But we can well understand that Mary, to whose promised Child was to be given "the throne of His father David", would desire to record herself with all due care of the line of David and in the city of David (See on i. 32.). She may also have desired to be under the pious care of Joseph, to whom the mystery of the Incarnation had been divinely revealed (See St. Matt. i. 20, 21.).

"Espoused." Literally this word means betrothed, but not yet married. Among the Jews however the espousals formed a rite little less binding than that of actual marriage, and the word "wife" being here used, it is probable that Joseph had already obeyed the Angel's command and taken Mary to be his wife, so far as to receive her into his house, and to be her guardian and protector (See St. Matt. i. 24.).

Judæa had been made a Roman province, and joined to that of Syria. Or we may suppose that, the census being made at the time of our Lord's Birth, it was first put in force as a means of taxing the people when Cyrenius became governor, on which occasion disturbances took place, as named by St. Luke himself (Acts v. 37.). The fact that St. Luke was well acquainted with this "taxing" under Cyrenius ten or eleven years after our Lord's Birth, and in narrating the speech of Gamaliel uses precisely the same word for it—'enrolment'—as here, is an argument of some weight in favour of the second of the above explanations. The same may be said of the word "first," which would surely be omitted if the Evangelist simply meant to say that the "taxing" was made while Cyrenius was governor.

7. "*Firstborn.*" See on St. Matt. i. 25.

in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

8 ¶ And there were in the same country shep-
[2] Or, *the night watches.*
herds abiding in the field, keeping [2] watch over their flock by night.

9 And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them,
[e] ch. 1. 12.
[f] ver. 31, 32. Gen. 12. 3. Matt. 28. 19. Mark 1. 15. ch. 24. 47. Col. 1. 23.
and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: [e] and they were sore afraid.

10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for,
[g] Isai. 9. 6.
[h] Matt. 1. 21.
behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, [f] which shall be to all people.

11 [g] For unto you is born this day in the city
[i] Matt. 1. 16. & 16. 16. ch. 1. 43. Acts 2. 36. & 10. 36. Phil. 2. 11.
of David [h] a Saviour, [i] which is Christ the Lord.

12 And this *shall be* a sign unto you; Ye shall

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7. "In a manger." It was an old belief that the birthplace of Christ was a mere cave in the rock, such places being frequently used for stables in the East.

"There was no room for them in the inn." Had they been rich and great they would doubtless have been received into the inn. Room would have been found for them then. Mark how these people by shutting out the poor shut out Christ. May it not be that, if we opened the door of our hearts to the poor, Christ might be born in us? Is it never the case that we can find room enough for this world and the things of this world, but no room for Christ and for those that belong to Him? Let us also think how fitting a beginning this was of the life of Him who was "despised and rejected of men," and who had "not where to lay "His head." Who then will dare to despise the poor (See St. James ii. 6.)? And who will not rather echo the Lord's own words, and say, "Blessed be ye poor" (vi. 20.)?

8—20. The vision to the Shepherds.

8. "Shepherds." David was once a shepherd at Bethlehem, and doubtless often watched his father Jesse's sheep on these same pastures. The country not being enclosed by fences, as with us, it was needful that the shepherds should be constantly keeping watch over their flocks.

9. "Came upon them." Suddenly and unexpectedly descending from heaven and appearing to them.

10. "I bring you good tidings." The word thus translated is the same which is used for preaching the Gospel, and from which the word 'Evangelist' is formed. This Divine messenger was the first preacher of the Gospel, and the first congregation was formed of a few poor shepherds.

"To all people." Literally, 'to all *the* people,' meaning probably the Jewish people, to whom the first offer of salvation was to be made.

11. "Christ the Lord." Thus does the Angel bear witness to the truth that Jesus was both the promised Messiah—the 'Anointed' (See on St. Matt. i. 1.),—and also "the Lord," to be adored in His Divine nature as Lord of heaven and earth.

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11. "*A Saviour.*" See on St. Matt. i. 21.

find the Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

13 [k] And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

14 [l] Glory to God in the highest, and on earth [m] peace, [n] good will toward men.

15 And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, [2] the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

16 And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger.

17 And when they had seen *it*, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this Child.

18 And all they that heard *it* wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

19 [o] But Mary kept all these things, and pondered *them* in her heart.

[k] Gen. 28. 12. & 32. 1, 2. Ps. 103. 20, 21. & 148. 2. Dan. 7. 10. Heb. 1. 14. Rev. 5. 11.

[l] ch. 19. 38. Eph. 1. 6. & 3. 10, 21. Rev. 5. 13.

[m] Isai. 57. 19. ch. 1. 79. Rom. 5. 1. Eph. 2. 17. Col. 1. 20.

[n] John 3. 16. Eph. 2. 4, 7. 2 Thess. 2. 16. 1 John 4. 9, 10.

[2] Gr. *the men the shepherds.*

[o] ver. 51. Gen. 37. 11. ch. 1. 66.

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13. "The heavenly host." The host—or army—of Angels who surround the throne of God, and of whom the Saviour spoke when He said He could, if He willed, call to His aid "more than twelve legions "of Angels" (St. Matt. xxvi. 53.). We read that when the foundations of the world were laid "the morning stars sang together, and all the "sons of God shouted for joy" (Job xxxviii. 7.). Now the new creation begins; and again all heaven rings with shouts of joy.

14. "Glory to God in the highest," &c. The Angels' joy is no selfish joy. They praise God for His "good will toward men." So in the wonderful visions of the Revelation we find the Angels singing the praises of the "Lamb that was slain," though He was slain not for them but for us (See Rev. v. 12.). "In the highest" means 'in heaven.'

17. "They made known abroad" &c. Thus will all who have themselves received and believed the "good tidings of great joy" seek to make them known to others. Probably the influence of these poor shepherds was not great enough to produce much effect, and the time was not come yet for the fuller manifestation of the Messiah. Yet some doubtless believed the shepherds' tale, and waited, like Simeon, for "the consolation of Israel" (25.).

19. "Pondered." That is, 'meditated upon.' It was quite in

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14. "*On earth peace.*" See on St. Matt. x. 34.

"*Good will toward men.*" A different reading is found in many very old copies of this Gospel, which by the addition of a single letter alters the meaning of these words into 'toward (or among) men of good-will'—that is, men of *God's* good-will, blessed and favoured by Him. If that reading be the true one, the Angels' song would then be best translated and stopped thus: 'Glory to God in the high-'est and on earth: peace among the men 'of God's favour.' We must remember that the stops are no part of the original Gospel, being added at a much later date (See *Note* on St. Mark iii. 19.). The reading however adopted by our own translators is on the whole to be preferred.

20 And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

The third year before the common date called Anno Domini 1.

21 ¶ [p] And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the Child, His name was called [q] JESUS, which was so named of the angel before He was conceived in the womb.

p Gen. 17. 12. Lev. 12. 3. ch. 1. 59.

q Matt. 1. 21, 25. ch. 1. 31.

22 ¶ And when [r] the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought Him to Jerusalem, to present *Him* to the Lord;

r Lev. 12. 2, 3, 4, 6.

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accordance with the blessed Virgin's character to store up in her memory, and secretly muse upon, the wonderful words she heard (See 51.). In the few places in which she is mentioned she appears thoughtful and meditative as well as meek and retiring.

20. **"Returned."** That is, to their former employment. What a thankful holy joy must have brightened all their after toils, and how often must they have conversed together of that wonderful night, in which they had heard and seen so great and glorious things.

21. The Circumcision.

21. **"When eight days"** &c. Jesus submits to the requirements of the Law, though needing them not (See on St. Matt. iii. 15.). By His Circumcision He also acknowledges Himself of the seed of Abraham (See also on i. 59.). The Circumcision of Christ is kept upon the first day of the year, being eight days, according to the Jewish mode of reckoning, after Christmas Day. So early does our Saviour begin to taste the cup of pain.

"The year begins with Thee,
"And Thou beginn'st with woe."
(*Christian Year.*)

The ceremony of circumcision was held to signify the renouncing of all the sinful lusts of the flesh, and this lesson is well drawn out in the Collect for the day:—"Almighty God, who madest Thy blessed "Son to be circumcised, and obedient to the law for man; Grant us "the true Circumcision of the Spirit; that, our hearts, and all our "members, being mortified from all worldly and carnal lusts, we may "in all things obey Thy blessed will; through the same Thy Son Jesus "Christ our Lord. Amen."

22—38. The Purification. Simeon and Anna.

22. **"The days of her purification."** Forty days. The law concerning purification will be found in Lev. xii.

"To present Him to the Lord." Observe how our Church, following the example of holy Scripture, centres our attention on the

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22. "*Her purification.*" It is right to point out that the word "her" is a correction of the original word, which means 'their,' being in the plural. This latter should certainly have been retained, as there is little doubt it was so written by St. Luke. Nor need any one scruple to include the Infant Jesus in the purification, who remembers that He was circumcised and baptized for us, in all things being "made like unto His brethren" (Heb. ii. 17.), sin only excepted.

23 (as it is written in the law of the Lord, [s] **Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;**) [s] Ex. 22. 29. & 34. 19. Num. 3. 13. & 8. 17. & 18. 15. Ex. 13. 2.

24 and to offer a sacrifice according to [t] that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons. [t] Lev. 12. 2, 6, 8.

25 And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name *was* Simeon; and the same man *was* just and devout, [u] waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. [u] ver. 38. Isai. 40. 1. Mark 15. 43.

26 And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not [x] see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. [x] Ps. 89. 48. Heb. 11. 5.

27 And he came [y] by the Spirit into the temple: [y] Matt. 4. 1.

Divine Child instead of on the human mother, entitling the Feast of the Purification (Feb. 2.), "The Presentation of Christ in the Temple, "commonly called, The Purification of Saint Mary the Virgin," and in the beautiful Collect for the Day drawing her lesson entirely from the Presentation of Christ, while no mention is made of the Virgin Mary.

23. "Every male that openeth the womb." That is, every first-born son. When God slew all the first-born in Egypt, He commanded that all the first-born of the children of Israel should be counted holy and dedicated to Him, and be redeemed, or bought back, by a payment of five shekels for each. Afterwards the tribe of Levi was taken by God in the place of the first-born of the whole nation, but these were still presented as an offering to God, and redeemed.

24. "A pair of turtledoves," &c. Rich women offered a lamb with a turtle-dove or young pigeon at their purification. The Virgin's offering was the offering of the poor (Lev. xii. 8.). Yet in very truth did this blessed Mother offer that Lamb, of which all the others were but types, for she brought with her the very "Lamb of God." The whole world would have been an offering nothing-worth compared to this.

25. "Waiting for the consolation of Israel." That is, for the coming of Him who was to save and deliver Israel (See 38.). It would seem from Simeon's words (32.) that he had been blessed with a clearer insight into the true nature of the "consolation of Israel" than many others. He did not look for a mere temporal or national deliverance, but for one in which Gentile would share as well as Jew. St. Paul when in Rome declared that he was a prisoner "for the hope of Israel" (Acts xxviii. 20.).

26. "It was revealed unto him" &c. We are not told how this revelation was made, except that, being "by the Holy Ghost," it was some *inward* intimation, not one made by an Angel or in a dream. It was probably of the nature of a prophecy.

"The Lord's Christ." "The Lord" is plainly here used for God the Father.

27. "By the Spirit." Feeling an impulse within him, which was in truth the prompting of the Holy Spirit.

and when the parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for Him after the custom of the law,

28 then took he Him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said,

29 Lord, [z] now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word:

30 for mine eyes [a] have seen Thy salvation,

31 which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people;

32 [b] a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel.

33 And Joseph and His mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of Him.

34 And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary His mother, Behold, this *Child* is set for the [c] fall

[z] Gen. 46. 30. Phil. 1. 23.
[a] Isai. 52. 10. ch. 3. 6.
[b] Isai. 9. 2. & 42. 6. & 49. 6. & 60. 1, 2, 3. Matt. 4. 16. Acts 13. 47. & 28. 28.
[c] Isai. 8. 14. Hosea 14. 9. Matt. 21. 44. Rom. 9. 32, 33. 1 Cor. 1. 23, 24. 2 Cor. 2. 16. 1 Pet. 2. 7, 8.

"The parents." Joseph stood in the place of a parent, though not really one (See on 48.).

28. "Then took he Him" &c. It had been revealed to Simeon that he should see Christ, and lo! he holds Him in his very arms. How blessed must that moment have been to the aged saint. Let us too wait for Christ in the daily use of the means of grace, and to us too will He come.

The "NUNC DIMITTIS," or Song of Simeon.

29. "Lord, now lettest Thou" &c. The Song of Simeon is a short hymn of thankful readiness to die now that he had seen Him who was come to bring salvation to all mankind. Simeon doubtless felt that the time of his departure was at hand. But God was making that departure very peaceful and blessed, and so he says, 'Lord, now art 'Thou dismissing Thy servant in peace.'

"According to Thy word." That is, the promise that had been made to him by a special revelation (26.).

31. "All people." This in the original is plural—'all peoples, or 'nations'; not, as in the Angel's message to the shepherds, 'all *the* 'people' (See on 10.).

32. "A light to lighten" &c. It needed a miraculous vision to teach St. Peter what Simeon here plainly declares (See Acts x. 11—16.). Observe, he not only declares that Christ should bring the Gentiles out of darkness to the true light, but also puts the Gentiles before the people of Israel. Fitly do we Gentiles use this holy song in our public worship, as a hymn of thanksgiving for that Salvation of which we have read in the second Evening Lesson and the knowledge of which should make us ready to depart in peace, whenever God shall call.

34. "Behold, this Child is set" &c. 'Appointed for the fall and 'rising of many'. It would be clearer if the word "again" were omitted in the English, as it makes it appear as though the *same* persons were to fall and rise again, which is not the sense. Some should fall, and some rise. Many would be offended at Christ, and refuse to believe, and to such He would be "a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence"

and rising again of many in Israel; and for [d] a sign which shall be spoken against;

[d] Acts 28. 22.

35 (yea, [e] a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.

[e] Ps. 42. 10. John 19. 25.

36 And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity;

(1 St. Pet. ii. 8.), so that they should fall and perish. Others would believe and be saved, being raised up by Christ to new life here and eternal life hereafter.

"A sign which shall be spoken against." A "sign" because "set" by God in the world as a witness of the truth (See St. John xviii. 37.), and yet one which would meet with constant opposition and rejection.

35. "Yea, a sword" &c. Simeon having named the opposition of men to Christ, foretells the anguish in store for the Virgin mother. Doubtless the bitter malice of men against her Divine Son would be to her "like the piercings of a sword" (Prov. xii. 18.). But above all would the sword enter her very soul in the hour of the Saviour's Crucifixion, of which, as we know, she was a witness (St. John xix. 26.).

"That the thoughts" &c. These words are to be joined in sense with the last verse, the saying concerning the "sword" being a parenthesis—that is, a short sentence introduced into the middle of another. The presence of Christ in the world as a sign rejected by many would be a touchstone to reveal the nature of men's hearts, showing whose thoughts were humble and lowly and teachable, and whose were proud and obstinate, who were really ready to receive the Messiah, and who were not.

36. "Anna, a prophetess." She, as was the case with other holy women (See Acts xxi. 9.), had been gifted with certain revelations by the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, probably in the sense of foretelling future events, rather than in that of mere inspired teaching (See on i. 67.).

"Of the tribe of Aser." That is, Asher, as the name is spelt in the Old Testament. This was one of the ten tribes of the kingdom of Israel carried away captive by the King of Assyria (2 Kings xvii. 6.) more than 700 years before the Birth of Christ. These ten tribes never returned to their own land, but it is very probable that some families from among them may have escaped and remained in the kingdom of Judah, especially as we find that when Hezekiah king of Judah, six years before the carrying away of Israel, invited the people of both kingdoms to join in keeping a solemn Passover at Jerusalem, some of the tribe of Asher came (2 Chron. xxx. 1—11.). It is easy to suppose that some of those who thus obeyed the king of Judah's invitation may have found refuge in his kingdom, when their own people were carried away into captivity. They would then share in the fortunes of the kingdom of Judah, which was afterwards carried into captivity to Babylon (2 Kings xxv. 1—11.), but after seventy years returned to their own land, as told us in the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah.

37 and she *was* a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but
f Acts 26. 7. 1 Tim. 5. 5. served *God* with fastings and prayers f night and day.
38 And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of Him to all
g ver. 25. Mark 15. 43. ch. 24. 21. them that g looked for redemption in 2 Jerusalem.
2 Or, *Israel.*
39 ¶ And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth.
h ver. 52. ch. 1. 80. 40 h And the Child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon Him.
i Ex. 23. 15, 17. & 34. 23. Deut. 16. 1, 16. 41 ¶ Now His parents went to Jerusalem i every year at the feast of the passover.
42 And when He was twelve years old, they went
A. D. 9. up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast.

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37. "**A widow of about fourscore and four years.**" Whether this describes Anna's entire age, or only the length of time she had been a widow is uncertain.

"**Departed not from the temple.**" That is, she was constant in her attendance at all the Temple services and hours of prayer.

38. "**To all them that looked**" &c. Thus there were some in Jerusalem at that time waiting in hope for the promised redemption, and who, like Simeon and Anna, were ready to receive their Redeemer, not as an earthly Prince and Deliverer, but as God should reveal Him.

39, 40. The Return to Nazareth, and Childhood of Jesus.

40. "**Grew, and waxed strong in spirit.**" Thus did the eternal Son of God humble Himself, "being found in fashion as a Man" (See on Phil. ii. 8.). He *emptied* Himself, as the word "humbled" in the Philippians literally means, of His Divine glories, that, as Man, He might grow and increase (See on 52.).

41—52. Jesus visiting the Temple when twelve years old.

41. "**His parents**" &c. So called, (See on 27.). It was commanded in the Law that every male among the Israelites should attend the three great feasts—the Passover, the feast of Pentecost or of Weeks, and the feast of Tabernacles,—at Jerusalem every year (See Ex. xxiii. 14—17.). Of these the Passover was the most solemn and important. The Virgin Mary's attendance at the Feast was an act of devotion not commanded by the Law.

42. "**When He was twelve years old.**" At that age Jewish children were called 'Sons of the Law,' and began to attend the Passover and other public rites of the Jewish Church. This is the one only

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39. "*They returned into Galilee.*" Upon the order of events at this time see *Note* on "There came wise men", St. Matt. ii. i.

43 And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the Child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and His mother knew not *of it.* A. D. 9.

44 But they, supposing Him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought Him among *their* kinsfolk and acquaintance.

45 And when they found Him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking Him.

46 And it came to pass, that after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.

47 And [k] all that heard Him were astonished at his understanding and answers. [k] Matt. 7. 28. Mark 1. 22. ch. 4. 22, 32. John 7. 15, 46.

48 And when they saw Him, they were amazed: and His mother said unto Him, Son, why hast Thou

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glimpse permitted us of our Lord's early years. Holy Scripture draws a veil over thirty years of our Lord's life, which is only here lifted for a few moments. Surely this is in order to centre our attention upon the great three years of His public ministry among men. The Bible teaches by its *silences*, as well as by its words (See on St. Mark i. 9.).

43. "The days." That is, the week of the Paschal feast (Ex. xii. 15, 16.).

44. "Supposing Him" &c. This was very natural, for the Jews travelled up to the feasts in great numbers, friends and neighbours forming large companies for the journey. Families might therefore easily become separated on the road, and this would cause no uneasiness, as they would find each other readily when they halted for the night. It has been well remarked on this passage that Christ is very often lost in the company of our friends and acquaintances, but very seldom found there. If we would find Him, we must seek Him in His Father's house.

46. "After three days." That is, from the time when they left Jerusalem. The first day's journey would be one day, the return to Jerusalem the second, and the next day, the third, they found Him.

"The doctors." Scribes and learned men, whose business it was to instruct the young in the Law, and who held classes for such instruction in rooms attached to the Temple.

"Both hearing them," &c. It is a mistake to suppose that our Lord was at this time taking the place of Teacher and instructing the learned men. He was rather being taught and questioned by them, though He in His wisdom asked questions also of His teachers, as was customary with the pupils in the Jewish schools. It was however His *answers* rather than His questions which caused the astonishment of all that heard Him.

48. "Amazed." Doubtless because this seeming neglect of them was so different from His usual thoughtful attention to their every wish.

A.D. 9. 12th Year of our Lord's life.

thus dealt with us? behold, Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing.

49 And He said unto them, How is it that ye sought Me? wist ye not that I must be about [1] My Father's business?

1 John 2. 16.

50 And [m] they understood not the saying which He spake unto them.

m ch. 9. 45. & 18. 34.

51 And He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but His mother [n] kept all these sayings in her heart.

n ver. 19. Dan. 7. 28.

52 And Jesus [o] increased in wisdom and [2] stature, and in favour with God and man.

o ver. 40. 1 Sam. 2. 26.

2 Or, *age*.

"Thy father." So the Divine Child had *hitherto* called Joseph, who stood to Him in the place of earthly father (See on 27.). *Now* He corrects the expression (See on next verse.). We may observe that the mother speaks (not Joseph), as having the greater right to do so.

49. "How is it that ye sought Me?" Jesus expresses surprise, as though Mary and Joseph might have known that, if not with them, it could only be because a Greater than they had called Him from them.

"About My Father's business." Literally, 'among the things of 'My Father,' and therefore perhaps, as many ancient interpreters understand the words, 'in My Father's house.' No doubt great force is to be laid upon the words "My Father." The Virgin Mary had just said "Thy father," speaking of Joseph. Her holy Child now, as it seems, for the first time openly claims His heavenly parentage, and corrects her, as though saying, 'Nay, it is *My Father* who has kept Me from thee. 'I am doing My Father's work,—engaged in those holy things which 'belong to Him.' Henceforth Joseph is heard of no more; and there can be no doubt that he died before the time of our Lord's public ministry (See on St. John ii. 12.). It was an ancient tradition that he was much older than the Virgin Mary, as he is always represented in pictures.

50. "They understood not" &c. We cannot suppose that they ever forgot the Angel's wondrous words, which declared that the Child of Mary should be "called the Son of God" (i. 35.). But doubtless they understood not the full depth and meaning of the saying they had just heard, and in which the Child they were nurturing for God perhaps first spoke of the work He had come to do.

51. "Subject unto them." That is, obedient. After this one glimpse of a duty and a work which would one day call Him from all human ties, He returns to His former course of holy subjection. For eighteen more years, lowly, sinless, unknown, He veils His Divine powers, and grows to the perfection of His adopted human nature.

"His mother kept" &c. Doubtless storing them up with the certainty that in patient waiting she should learn their full meaning (See on 19.).

52. "Jesus increased" &c. This verse alone is a proof that Christ was perfect Man as well as perfect God. He submitted to the laws and conditions of that nature which He had taken to Himself. Thus, as

CHAPTER III.

A.D. 26. 30th Year of our Lord's life.

1 *The preaching and baptism of John:* 15 *his testimony of Christ.* 20 *Herod imprisoneth John.* 21 *Christ baptized, receiveth testimony from heaven.* 23 *The age, and genealogy of Christ from Joseph upwards.*

NOW in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judæa,

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His "human flesh" grew in stature, so His "reasonable soul" increased in wisdom. As Man, He laid aside while on earth the exercise of that Divine Omniscience (that is, knowledge of all things) which belonged to Him of right as God (See on 40. and St. Matt. xxiv. 36.). Many very blessed thoughts flow from the truth here revealed to us. Among others it is a very blessed thing to know that Jesus has sanctified for us every age—Childhood, Boyhood, Youth, Manhood,—by passing through all, and showing forth in turn the graces and perfection of each. It was the opinion of St. Cyril (a writer who lived about 400 years after Christ) that the Divine nature of our Lord revealed itself in proportion with the growth of His human nature.

"**In favour with God and man.**" The word translated "favour" is the same which is often translated 'grace,' and "with" means either 'towards' or 'in the sight of.' Thus we must not suppose the Evangelist to assert (as some might fancy from the English version) that Jesus gradually gained the favourable regard of God, as though He had ever been without it. The words rather mean that He grew in *grace* (See 40.) in the sight of both God and man. Or, if we prefer to retain "favour," that He received more and more outward marks and evidences of God's favour, as well as man's goodwill. It is probable that He was known to but a small circle, it being His holy will to live in retirement in His humble home until the time for His greater work was come, but as yet man's enmity was not roused against Him, because He did not yet expose man's sin (See on iv. 16.).

CHAPTER III.

1—18. The preaching of John the Baptist.

St. Matt. iii. 1—12. St. Mark i. 1—8.

1. "**Tiberius Cæsar.**" He was the emperor of Rome next after Augustus (See on ii. 1.) from A.D. 15 to A.D. 37.

"**Pontius Pilate.**" Roman governor (strictly 'procurator') of Judæa. After the banishment of Archelaus, son of Herod the Great, Judæa became a Roman province, or rather a division of the larger province of Syria (See on ii. 2.). Like other such divisions of provinces, it had its own governor, called a 'procurator', for the collection of taxes and administering of justice, and, although he was strictly speaking only a subordinate ruler under the governor general of the province, yet he was very often left much to his own discretion, and exercised considerable power. Cæsarea was made the capital under the Roman governors, who held their court there; but they often went to Jerusalem, especially at the time of the great festivals, when their presence, with that of their troops, was sometimes needed for the sake of order

A. D. 26. and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituræa and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene,

[a] John 11. 49, 51. & 18. 13. Acts 4. 6.

2 [a] Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness.

3 And he came into all the country about Jordan,

[b] ch. 1. 77.

preaching the baptism of repentance [b] for the remission of sins;

4 as it is written in the book of the words of

[c] John 1. 23.

Esaias the prophet, saying, [c] **The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight.**

(See on St. Matt. xxvii. 2. St. John xviii. 3.). Pontius Pilate was the sixth governor since the banishment of Archelaus, and he had now been three years in office. He was cruel and overbearing, and especially disliked the Jews, over whom he was placed, and whom he had deeply offended by his open contempt for their religion (See farther on St. John xix. 14, 16.).

"Herod being tetrarch of Galilee." This was Herod Antipas, a son of Herod the Great (See on St. Matt. xiv. 1.), and the same who beheaded John the Baptist.

"Philip." This was another son of Herod the Great, but not the Philip whose wife Herodias Herod Antipas had taken (19.), and who was his half-brother. Herod the Great named two sons Philip. Philip the "tetrarch" was the best of Herod's family. Ituræa and Trachonitis were regions lying beyond the Jordan Eastward from Galilee (*See Map.*).

"Lysanias." Nothing is known of Lysanias. He ruled, under the title of 'tetrarch,' a small district to the north of the Holy Land, lying along the Eastern side of the range of Mount Lebanon (*See Map.*).

2. "Annas and Caiaphas." According to the Jewish law, there could be but one High-priest, and he held his office for life. However Herod first, and afterwards the Romans, abused their power by making any changes they pleased, for the sake of putting their own friends into the office. Thus Annas was deposed by the Romans, and after several others had held the office for a short time, his son-in-law Caiaphas was appointed. It appears that Annas, though deprived of his office, had not seriously offended the Romans, since he seems to have been allowed to exercise a sort of joint authority with Caiaphas, and it is probable that the Jews would privately recognize him as the lawful High-priest, just as we should recognize the Archbishop of Canterbury as the lawful Archbishop, if expelled from his office by some foreign power (See farther on St. John xviii. 13.).

"The word of God came" &c. That is, John the Baptist received a special command from God to begin his preaching. The same expression is used of the inspiration of the prophets in the Old Testament (See Jer. i. 2, 4, 11, 13.). John was at this time in retirement "in the "wilderness" (See on i. 80.), and, like Jesus Himself, about thirty years of age.

5 **Every valley shall be filled, and every moun-** A. D. 26.
tain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways *shall be* **made smooth;**

6 **and** [d] **all flesh shall see the salvation of God.** [d] Ps. 98. 2. Isai. 52. 10. Is. 40. 3, 4, 5. ch. 2. 10.

7 Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

8 Bring forth therefore fruits [2] worthy of repent- [2] Or, *meet for.*
ance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to *our* father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

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5. "Every valley" &c. St. Luke quotes the prophecy at greater length than St. Matthew and St. Mark, who only give the first verse of the passage (i. e. Isai. xl. 3.). Here we have all three verses, and the comment upon it has therefore been left for this Gospel. The figure seems taken from the ancient custom of sending forward a body of men (pioneers) to make or repair the road by which some great person—such as a king with his attendants, or a general with his army—was about to travel. The first and nearer subject of this beautiful prophecy is the return of the Jews from their captivity, the prophet beholding them in his vision as a mighty army marching through the wilderness back to their own land, the Lord going before them as their Deliverer and Leader. But *to us* the farther and more glorious fulfilment so stands out in the front that this its earlier fulfilment is almost hidden from sight. *To us* the great Person in the prophecy is the everblessed Son of God. The road is to be made in the hearts of men that He may enter in and dwell there. Thus the valleys would represent sloth and unbelief and all sins of omission, which must be filled up by the diligent adding of grace to grace (2 St. Peter i. 5—7.). The mountains would mean pride and haughtiness and self-will and obstinacy, which must be humbled and cast down. The crooked places would signify all sorts of deceit and guile and hypocrisy and untruthfulness. The rough ways would picture anger, strife, envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness. It is by the removal of all these obstacles—these stumbling-blocks of iniquity (See Ezek. xiv. 3.)—that a road can be made in our hearts such as the Lord will pass over. Yet He who desires the road to be made will in mercy Himself send those who shall make it:—He who would find a way into our hearts will send His Holy Spirit to prepare the way before Him.

6. "All flesh." That is, all mankind; yet not at once, but as it shall please God in the unfolding of His gracious purposes, and according to the faithfulness of those who bear the commission to "preach the "Gospel to every creature" (St. Mark xvi. 15.).

7. "To the multitude." But addressing his words, as we find from St. Matthew, especially to the Scribes and Pharisees and such as came to him in hypocrisy and without true repentance.

A. D. 26.

[e] Matt. 7. 19.

9 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: [e] every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

[f] Acts 2. 37.

10 And the people asked him, saying, [f] What shall we do then?

[g] ch. 11. 41. 2 Cor. 8. 14. James 2. 15, 16. 1 John 3. 17. & 4. 20.

11 He answereth and saith unto them, [g] He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.

[h] Matt. 21. 32. ch. 7. 29.

12 Then [h] came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do?

[i] ch. 19. 8.

13 And he said unto them, [i] Exact no more than that which is appointed you.

[2] Or, *Put no man in fear.*

[k] Ex. 23. 1. Lev. 19. 11.

[3] Or, *allowance.*

14 And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, [2] Do violence to no man, [k] neither accuse *any* falsely; and be content with your [3] wages.

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10. "What shall we do then?" That is, as a proof of true repentance. Some of those so sternly addressed as a "generation of vipers" no doubt felt anxious to make their repentance real. They had come as hypocrites; but they had borne, and been moved by, the stern rebuke they had received, and would stay as penitents.

This and the next four verses contain a most valuable portion of the Baptist's teaching only found in this Gospel. They show us how he applied his doctrine to various classes of persons.

11. "He that hath two coats," &c. The principle running through the Baptist's three answers in this passage is that of putting his finger upon the besetting sin, and saying, 'If you would bring forth fruits of 'penitence, cure this first.' We may therefore be sure that want of charity to the poor was a very general besetting sin among those whom he addressed, who were probably of the class most able to give, since the publicans and soldiers came separately (See xi. 41.).

12. "Also publicans." The collectors of the public taxes for the Romans (See on St. Matt. v. 46.). These were of various ranks, but generally a very low class of men. They had great opportunity of cheating the people by making them pay more than the proper sum due, and this temptation very few of them withstood.

13. "Exact no more" &c. Observe the wisdom of this advice. St. John does not say, 'Leave a calling of such great temptation, and 'take to some more honest livelihood'; but simply, 'Conquer the great 'temptation of your calling, and do your duty in that state of life in 'which God has placed you' (Compare St. Paul's advice, 1 Cor. vii. 20.).

14. "The soldiers." Literally 'men marching under arms.' These were in all probability Jewish soldiers, belonging to Herod's army. Herod was at this time at war with his father-in-law Aretas, king of Arabia (See on St. Matt. xiv. 3.), and his troops would have to march through the region in which St. John the Baptist was preaching and baptizing. Force must be laid on the word "*we*" in their question, which, as it stands in the Greek, is as follows:—'And *we*—what must we do?'

"Do violence to no man," &c. Soldiers quartered in any place were

15 And as the people were [2]in expectation, and all men [3]mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not; A. D. 26.

[2] Or, *in suspense.*

[3] Or, *reasoned, or, debated.*

16 John answered, saying unto *them* all, I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:

17 whose fan *is* in His hand, and He will throughly purge His floor, and [1]will gather the wheat into His garner; but the chaff He will burn with fire unquenchable.

[1] Micah 4. 12. Matt. 13. 30.

18 And many other things in his exhortation preached he unto the people.

19 ¶ [m] But Herod the tetrarch, being reproved by A. D. 26.

[m] Mark 6. 17.

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very apt to be rough and violent in order to extort money or other things from the people. They also frequently brought false charges against any who had offended them, or had refused their violent demands. Thus the Baptist's answer to them touches their besetting sins, and is like that to the publicans in not telling them to give up a dangerous calling but exhorting them to do their duty in it faithfully.

15. "In expectation." That is, of the coming of the Messiah, of which there was a very general expectation at the time.

"Mused." That is, 'thought' or 'reasoned' (*See Margin.*).

16. "The latchet of whose shoes." The shoes worn by the Jews were only sandals, or leathern soles bound on to the foot by thongs. The "latchet" here means the thong of the sandal.

18. "Preached he." Literally, 'preached he glad tidings unto.' The whole verse would be best translated, 'And with many other exhortations he preached the glad tidings unto the people'—that is, doubtless, the glad tidings of the approach of Christ. The word for "preached" is the same as that used by the Angel to the shepherds (See on ii. 10.).

19, 20. St. John the Baptist imprisoned.

St. Matt. xiv. 1—12.

19. "But Herod" &c. This and the next verse refer to an event which happened some little time after the first appearance and preaching of the Baptist, and of course after the Baptism of Jesus which follows. There is nothing unusual in an historian, when speaking of some person or event, bringing in something which happened at a later time in order to complete his subject. And here the Baptist's reproof of Herod and its consequences fall in most naturally with the account of his general preaching and exhortation. In fact the 18th verse prepares the way for such an after event being named, since it describes what no doubt continued for some months (See ix. 7—9.).

A. D. 26. him for Herodias his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done,

20 added yet this above all, that he shut up John in prison.

A. D. 27. 31st Year of our Lord's life.

21 ¶ Now when all the people were baptized, [n] it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened,

22 and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art My beloved Son; in Thee I am well pleased.

[n] John 1. 32.

[o] See Num. 4. 3, 35, 39, 43, 47.

23 ¶ And Jesus Himself began to be [o] about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) [p] the Son of Joseph, which was *the son* of Heli,

[p] Mat. 13. 55. John 6. 42.

24 which was *the son* of Matthat, which was *the son* of Levi, which was *the son* of Melchi, which was *the son* of Janna, which was *the son* of Joseph,

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21, 22. The Baptism of Jesus.

St. Matt. iii. 13—17. St. Mark i. 9—11.

21. "Praying." This is told us by St. Luke alone, and yet we could hardly have doubted it, even had holy Scripture been silent. All the great instances of God's testimony to His Son by a voice from heaven took place when He was praying. It was so at the Transfiguration (ix. 29.). It was so when the answer came to His petition, "Father, "glorify Thy Name" (St. John xii. 28.).

23—38. Genealogy.

St. Matt. i. 1—17.

23. "And Jesus Himself began" &c. This sentence would be more literally translated—'And Jesus Himself was about thirty years 'of age when He began'—that is, probably, when He began His public ministry. Thirty was the legally appointed age for those who served in the Tabernacle (See Numbers iv. 3, 23, 30, &c.).

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23. "*Being (as was supposed) the Son "of Joseph, which was the son of Heli.*" It is forcing these words very much to suppose them to be the beginning of Mary's genealogy, and not Joseph's. Yet many commentators have taken this view, and it need not be pronounced inadmissible. It is certainly strange that Joseph's father should by St. Matthew be named Jacob, and by St. Luke Heli (But see *Note* on St. Matt. i. 16.). Those who think St. Luke gives (as we must confess it would be natural he should give) the genealogy of the Virgin Mary, as being our Lord's *real*—instead of his *legal*—descent, either suppose Joseph to be called [Son] of Heli, though only son-in-law, or else, placing all the words ("being, as was supposed, the Son "of Joseph") within brackets, understand "[Son] of Heli" to be spoken of Jesus, Heli being His grandfather, and the Virgin Mary's name being omitted, because the Jews did not name women in their genealogies. It should be remembered that the word "son" never occurs in the Greek throughout this genealogy except only in the first instance "Son of "Joseph" (See *Note* on St. Matt. xx. 6.).

25 which was *the son* of Mattathias, which was *the son* of Amos, which was *the son* of Naum, which was *the son* of Esli, which was *the son* of Nagge, A. D. 27.

26 which was *the son* of Maath, which was *the son* of Mattathias, which was *the son* of Semei, which was *the son* of Joseph, which was *the son* of Juda,

27 which was *the son* of Joanna, which was *the son* of Rhesa, which was *the son* of Zorobabel, which was *the son* of Salathiel, which was *the son* of Neri,

28 which was *the son* of Melchi, which was *the son* of Addi, which was *the son* of Cosam, which was *the son* of Elmodam, which was *the son* of Er,

29 which was *the son* of Jose, which was *the son* of Eliezer, which was *the son* of Jorim, which was *the son* of Matthat, which was *the son* of Levi,

30 which was *the son* of Simeon, which was *the son* of Juda, which was *the son* of Joseph, which was *the son* of Jonan, which was *the son* of Eliakim,

31 which was *the son* of Melea, which was *the son* of Menan, which was *the son* of Mattatha, which was *the son* of [q] Nathan, [r] which was *the son* of David,

[q] Zech. 12. 12.
[r] 2 Sam. 5. 14. 1 Chron. 3. 5.

32 [s] which was *the son* of Jesse, which was *the son* of Obed, which was *the son* of Booz, which was *the son* of Salmon, which was *the son* of Naasson,

[s] Ruth 4. 18, &c. 1 Chron. 2. 10, &c.

33 which was *the son* of Aminadab, which was *the son* of Aram, which was *the son* of Esrom, which was *the son* of Phares, which was *the son* of Juda,

34 which was *the son* of Jacob, which was *the son* of Isaac, which was *the son* of Abraham, [t] which was *the son* of Thara, which was *the son* of Nachor,

[t] Gen. 11. 24, 26.

35 which was *the son* of Saruch, which was *the son* of Ragau, which was *the son* of Phalec, which was *the son* of Heber, which was *the son* of Sala,

36 [u] which was *the son* of Cainan, which was *the son* of Arphaxad, [x] which was *the son* of Sem, which was *the son* of Noe, which was *the son* of Lamech,

[u] See Gen. 11. 12.
[x] Gen. 5. 6, &c. & 11. 10, &c.

37 which was *the son* of Mathusala, which was *the son* of Enoch, which was *the son* of Jared, which was *the son* of Maleleel, which was *the son* of Cainan,

38 which was *the son* of Enos, which was *the son*

A. D. 27. of Seth, which was *the son* of Adam, [y] which was *the*
[y] Gen. 5. 1, 2. *son* of God.

CHAPTER IV.

1 *The temptation and fasting of Christ.* 13 *He overcometh the devil:* 14 *beginneth to preach.* 16 *The people of Nazareth admire His gracious words.* 33 *He cureth one possessed of a devil,* 38 *Peter's mother in law,* 40 *and divers other sick persons.* 41 *The devils acknowledge Christ, and are reproved for it.* 43 *He preacheth through the cities.*

AND Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned
[a] ver. 14. ch. 2. 27. from Jordan, and [a] was led by the Spirit into
[b] Ex. 34. 28. 1 Kings 19. 8. the wilderness,
2 being forty days tempted of the devil. And [b] in

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38. "Which was *the son* of Adam, which was *the son* of God." Thus St. Luke traces our Lord's genealogy up to the beginning. St. Matthew goes no farther back than Abraham, his Gospel being intended chiefly for Jewish readers. St. Luke, who writes for all, goes back to the beginning of the human race, setting forth Christ as the Saviour of all, "and as being not only the Seed promised to Abraham, "but also that Seed of the woman promised from the very beginning, "who was to bruise the serpent's head (See Gen. iii. 15.)" (*Lonsdale* and *Hale*.).

CHAPTER IV.

1—13. The Temptation.

St. Matt. iv. 1—11. St. Mark i. 12, 13.

1. "Being full of the Holy Ghost." The Holy Ghost had just descended upon Jesus in His Baptism, and His human nature was now perfectly endowed with that holy Gift. Thus was He fitted to meet the great enemy. The descent of the Spirit was as the anointing of the Warrior for the combat. It is in the same Divine strength that *we* must do battle with the devil, if we would prevail. Again, mark how this conflict took place immediately after the manifested outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon our Lord. Thus when we have gained some new increase of grace, we may expect the assaults of the evil one to become fiercer.

"By the Spirit." This, and like expressions,—such as that Jesus "returned in the power of the Spirit" (14.), that "the Spirit of the "Lord" was "upon" Him (18.), that He "through the eternal Spirit "offered Himself without spot to God" (Heb. ix. 14.),—set forth our Lord, in the most striking way, as "very Man." In His Godhead He is One with the Holy Spirit, even as He and the Father are One. In His Manhood He was "filled," "anointed," "led," by the Spirit, even as one of us. "In all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His "brethren" (Heb. ii. 17.).

2. "Being forty days tempted." We gather from these words, and from St. Mark, that the temptation lasted during the whole forty days. Thus the three temptations recorded are apparently only specimens of the evil one's attacks, though doubtless his last and fiercest.

"Tempted." It is well to mark clearly the distinction between

those days He did eat nothing: and when they A. D. 27.
were ended, He afterward hungered.

3 And the devil said unto Him, If Thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread.

4 And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, **That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.** Deut. 8. 3.

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temptation and sin. Temptation is not sin. The yielding to temptation is sin. Temptation is the knocking at the door. It is the opening of the door which is sin. So long as the will gives no consent, and the heart allows no resting-place, to the temptation, there is no sin. St. James well describes the exact point when temptation passes into sin: "When *lust hath conceived*, it bringeth forth sin" (St. James i. 15.). When the desire of evil is once admitted into the soul, the sin has begun. The evil may fall like a shadow across the soul, and cause pain and grief, yet without sin. The evil thoughts presented to our Lord by Satan fell like shadows across the pure brightness of His Soul, but they could not rest there. They were thrown off, as if from some polished surface, which they could not fasten upon, or tarnish in passing. They were met by an all-holy will, and from that they fell back harmless. Temptations are like evil seed which Satan sows broadcast; for there are *two* sowers in the world. But the evil seed no more finds entrance into the pure and holy heart, than the good seed into the hardened heart. When the evil seed finds ever so brief a resting-place, and shoots its first small root into the heart, then there is sin. It is a most blessed thing to know that temptation is not sin, and that Jesus was tempted. For temptations are often very grievous to God's servants.

3. **"If Thou be the Son of God."** Observe how in this temptation, as well as in that on the pinnacle of the Temple, Satan tempts our Lord (not only first to *dis*trust in God, and then to *false* trust in God, but also) to make *display of His miraculous powers*. Up to this time our Lord had done no miracle. He is now about to show forth to the world His miraculous power. Who else but He would have forborne to exercise it, if only to make proof of the wondrous gift? Few things in our Lord's life on earth are more wonderful than this, namely that, conscious within Himself of almighty power, He calmly refuses to exercise it. He carries into the wilderness a heaven-wrought weapon which no power can resist, yet He lays it aside. He could wield the might of God; but He of His own will chooses the weakness of Man. "O Saviour," (writes the good Bishop Hall) "none of Thy miracles is more worthy of astonish-"ment than Thy not doing of miracles!" It was an ancient opinion that Satan was doubtful of our Lord's real Divine nature at first, and desired to make trial of it. Thus St. Leo, about four hundred years after Christ, writes as follows of our Lord's temptation: "That He might "loose mankind from the bonds of deadly transgression, He concealed "from the devil's fury the power of His own Majesty, and opposed him "in the infirmity of our lowliness." Whether this be so, or not, is of little importance. But one thing is very plain,—that Jesus, not only now, but all through His life on earth, stedfastly refused to Himself

A. D. 27. 5 And the devil, taking Him up into an high mountain, shewed unto Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

6 And the devil said unto Him, All this power will I give Thee, and the glory of them: for [e] that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it.

[e] John 12. 31. & 14. 30. Rev. 13. 2, 7.

7 If Thou therefore wilt [2] worship me, all shall be Thine.

[2] Or, *fall down before me.*

8 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind Me, Satan: for it is written, **Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.** Deut. 6. 13. & 10. 20.

9 And he brought Him to Jerusalem, and set Him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto Him, If Thou be the Son of God, cast Thyself down from hence:

10 for it is written, **He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee:**

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all mere display of His miraculous power. He did no miracle for His own fame or glory (See on St. Matt. xii. 15.). In His encounter with Satan our Lord will contend *as Man*, and with none but *human weapons*. He could have summoned twelve legions of Angels, had He pleased, and swept the hateful tempter from His presence in a moment. But how then could He be our Pattern in fighting, or give us a pledge of conquering, as He conquered? He uses no weapons but those which He puts also into our hands. In the strength of the Holy Ghost, in prayer and fasting, in perfect trust in God, and with the "sword of the Spirit," He meets the enemy and conquers him.

5. "**In a moment of time.**" This must then have been a splendid vision created by the tempter, in which the world seemed spread out below with its greatest and wealthiest cities and its varied lands and people, a picture of all that was great and rich and beautiful. It lasted but a moment: and may we not turn Satan's vision against himself, and say, Thus too "the world passeth away, and the lust thereof" (1 St. John ii. 17.)?

6. "**To whomsoever I will I give it.**" So says he who was "a liar "from the beginning." The Spirit of truth says, "There is no power "but of God" (Rom. xiii. 1.).

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8. "*Get thee behind Me, Satan.*" That this was the end of the temptations is plain (See *Note* on St. Matt. iv. 5.); but probably these words—"Get thee behind "Me, Satan, for"—were not written here by St. Luke, since they are not found in some of the best ancient copies, and may very easily have been put in by mistake by some copyist familiar with St. Matthew's account. It seems not unlikely that St. Luke, instead of following the historical order of the three Temptations, gives them in what may be called their natural order, as advancing from lower to higher, this order being the same as that in St. John's words, "the lust of the "flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the "pride of life" (1 St. John ii. 16.).

11 and in *their* hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone: Ps. 91. 11, 12. A. D. 27.

12 And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, **Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.** Deut. 6. 16.

13 And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from Him [d] for a season. [d] John 14. 30. Heb. 4. 15.

14 ¶ [e] And Jesus returned [f] in the power of the Spirit into [g] Galilee: and there went out a fame of Him through all the region round about. A. D. 28. 32nd Year of our Lord's life. [e] Matt. 4. 12. John 4. 43. [f] ver. 1. [g] Acts 10. 37.

15 And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all.

16 And He came to [h] Nazareth, where He had been brought up: and, as His custom was, [i] He went [h] Matt. 2. 23. [i] Acts 13. 14. & 17. 2.

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13. "For a season." Possibly we may suppose that in the Agony in Gethsemane Satan again visited our Lord, tempting Him to put away the cup of suffering from Him as too bitter to drink (See on St. Matt. xxvi. 37.). At all events, even if he could not himself again approach our Lord so closely, Satan wrought his malice through the Chief Priests and Judas Iscariot.

14—32. Our Lord's preaching, and rejection, at Nazareth.

Compare St. Matt. xiii. 54—58. and St. Mark vi. 1—6.

14. "Jesus returned." That is, from Judæa, His Baptism having taken place in that province, where St. John the Baptist was baptizing in the Jordan.

"In the power of the Spirit." That is, the Holy Spirit, which had descended upon Him in His Baptism (See on St. Matt. iii. 16.), and which dwelt in Him so mightily, for God gave not "the Spirit by "measure unto Him" (St. John iii. 34.).

15. "Being glorified of all." This must be understood as a general account of the reception which our Lord met with on His first tour in Galilee. A striking exception to this general favour is now about to be recorded.

16. "Where He had been brought up." How much is gathered up in these few simple words. And how naturally we long to know more about our Lord during the thirty years of His hidden life at Nazareth (See on ii. 42.). All that we do know is that He lived a humble lowly life, with His gentle thoughtful mother, and His reputed father,

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14. "*Into Galilee.*" See *Note* on St. Matt. iv. 12.

16. "*He came to Nazareth.*" It is a much disputed question whether this visit to Nazareth is the same with that described in St. Matt. xiii. 54—58, and St. Mark vi. 1—6. There are no doubt striking points of likeness, but certainly nothing that could not have occurred on two separate occasions. There is no doubt that the Evangelists do not profess, or purpose, to relate all things in the order in which they happened: but in this case there are marks of time, which must not be neglected. Thus in this place it is hard to suppose that St. Luke does not mean that verse 16 should be closely connected with what goes before, and describe what

A.D. 28. into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.

17 And there was delivered unto Him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written,

18 **The Spirit of the Lord *is* upon Me, because**

Joseph the carpenter. It is even probable that Jesus in His youth helped Joseph in His trade, for His fellow-townsmen asked, "Is not "this *the Carpenter?*" (St. Mark vi. 3.). Even of His character, as displayed in His humble home, we have nothing distinctly told us but that He was "subject" to those who were called His "parents" (See on ii. 27.). Yet we can scarcely doubt that He who, when twelve years old, had spoken those solemn words about His Father's business (ii. 49.), must have continually shown forth more and more that that Father's business was the one great thing He had come to do.

"As His custom was." We cannot be quite sure in what light the Jews regarded our Lord and His teaching. Possibly He was recognized as an inspired Prophet. At all events He was allowed to teach in the synagogues (See on St. Matt. iv. 23.). His standing up to read showed His own desire to address the congregation, and the readiness with which His desire was complied with showed that His claim to teach was publicly allowed (But see St. Mark v. 22. and Acts xiii. 15.).

17. "The book of the prophet Esaias." The Books of the Old Testament were written out on rolls of parchment, each probably on a separate roll. The book of the prophet Isaiah was probably that from which the lessons of the season were being read, but whether our Lord read the appointed lesson, or chose the passage for Himself, we cannot tell. The words, "He found the place," would lead us rather to suppose the latter.

18. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me," &c. In these words (which belong to that latter portion of Isaiah's prophecy which is so full of Christ) the prophet seems to be speaking as the mouthpiece of the Lord, and not concerning himself. The prophet speaks; but the voice is the voice of One greater than the prophet—even of the Lord the Anointed. In the words, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me," "the Lord" is plainly used of God the Father, who is often called the "Lord"; for "the Father is Lord, the Son Lord, and the Holy Ghost "Lord." So "the LORD said unto my Lord" (Ps. cx. 1. St. Matt. xxii. 44.), where the first is spoken of the Father, the second of the Son. Observe St. Peter's words concerning this anointing of the Son by the Father, "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost" (Acts x. 38. Compare also on St. Matt. iii. 16.).

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took place very shortly after our Lord's return into Galilee. While in St. Matt. xiii. 54. it is equally difficult to suppose that St. Matthew does not mean to fix the visit to Nazareth there related *after* the speaking of the seven Parables, which was at a later time than this. But, if we turn to St. Matt. iv. 13, we find an account of our Lord's leaving Nazareth to dwell at Capernaum, and this most naturally answers to verse 31 of this chapter, and is indeed partly accounted for by the events here related, so that from St. Matthew alone we may gather a hint of this earlier visit to Nazareth, and thus conclude that the two narratives probably refer to different occasions.

He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,

A.D. 28.

19 **to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.**

Isai. 61. 1, 2.

20 And He closed the book, and He gave *it* again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on Him.

21 And He began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.

22 And all bare Him witness, and [k] wondered at

[k] Ps. 45. 2. ch. 2. 47.

"**Anointed Me.**" Made Me *the Christ*—the Anointed. Anointing is the emblem of the pouring out of the Holy Spirit.

"**The poor.**" In Isaiah it is the "meek," by which we learn that the *poor in spirit* are meant in this place.

19. "**The acceptable year of the Lord.**" That is, the welcome time of the Lord's coming to save the world. Observe how Jesus stops short in His quotation, not going on to "the day of vengeance" which follows in Isaiah. His message as yet is all of mercy and love.

20. "**He closed the book,**" &c. Jesus would close the book by rolling it up on the piece of wood to which one end of the roll would be fastened. He then handed it to the "minister"—the attendant whose duty it was to take care of the books, and "sat down," according to the custom of Jewish teachers, to begin His sermon.

"**The eyes of all**" &c. No doubt these Nazarenes had heard the strange reports which must already have begun to spread concerning the miraculous power and heavenly wisdom of Him who had so long lived among them, probably known chiefly by His singular holiness and retiring modesty. And now, when He appears among them in His new character and authority, they listen eagerly.

21. "**This day**" &c. Only the opening words are here given us, for we cannot suppose that the interruption mentioned in the next verse took place immediately our Lord had begun to speak. No doubt He explained the passage He had read as His text, and showed how wonderfully it was fulfilled in Himself.

22. "**All bare Him witness,**" &c. That is, bare witness to the wisdom and power and eloquence with which He spoke. They would hardly be prepared to receive His application of the prophetic words to Himself as *true*. Yet His "gracious words" impressed them greatly, and filled them with wonder when they remembered His lowly origin,

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18. "*Recovering of sight*" &c. The differences between this passage and Isaiah are easily accounted for, partly by the fact that, although our Lord doubtless read the text from the Hebrew, yet St. Luke, writing in Greek, quotes it from the Greek Translation then in use, known as the 'Septuagint'; and partly by the fact that the Scripture writers seek to convey the sense, rather than the exact words, of the passages they quote (For a remarkable instance of the latter practice compare Ephesians v. 14. with Isaiah lx. 1.).

A.D. 28. the gracious words which proceeded out of His
[l] John 6. 42. mouth. And they said, [l] Is not this Joseph's Son?

23 And He said unto them, Ye will surely say unto Me this proverb, Physician, heal Thyself: what-
[m] Matt. 4. 13. & 11. 23. soever we have heard done in [m] Capernaum, do also here in Thy country.

[n] John 4. 44. 24 And He said, Verily I say unto you, No [n] prophet is accepted in His own country.

[o] 1 Kin. 17. 9. & 18. 1. James 5. 17. 25 But I tell you of a truth, [o] many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land;

26 but unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, *a city* of Sidon, unto a woman *that was* a widow.

[p] 2 Kin. 5. 14. 27 [p] And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.

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so that a murmur ran through the people, "Is not this Joseph's Son?" Observe the witness borne to His manner by the officers sent to take Him (St. John vii. 46.).

23. "Ye will surely say" &c. Jesus knew their thoughts, and put them into words for them. By "Physician, heal Thyself," is meant, 'Thou doest miracles elsewhere; do miracles now here, so as to 'prove Thy words and gain Thyself honour.'

"In Capernaum." The only miracle we know of as performed in Capernaum before this time was the healing of the nobleman's son (St. John iv. 46—54. See *Note* on St. Matt. iv. 12.). Our Lord's miracles of healing however were so numberless that we may well suppose there were others.

24. "No prophet is accepted" &c. Because the man is considered rather than the office (See on St. Matt. xiii. 57.).

25. "Many widows" &c. Our Lord proceeds to show the Nazarenes two instances in which prophets, not being honoured in their own country, conferred their blessings on strangers. It was not to an Israelitish widow that Elijah was sent; it was not an Israelitish leper whom Elisha cleansed.

27. "Eliseus." The Greek form of the name Elisha, as Elias of Elijah, Sarepta of Zarephath. It is observable that our Lord in two notable instances praised the faith of those who were strangers to Israel in a manner which might well put to shame those of His own country; saying to the woman of Canaan, "O woman, great is thy faith" (St. Matt. xv. 28.), and to the Centurion, "I have not found so great "faith, no, not in Israel" (vii. 9.).

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25. "*Three years and six months.*" (Compare St. James v. 17.) In 1 Kings xviii. 1. it is said that the drought ceased "in the "third year"; but it must have continued some time *before* Elijah was directed to go to the widow of Sarepta, so that there is no difficulty in regard to the length of time.

28 And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, A.D. 28.

29 and rose up, and thrust Him out of the city, and led Him unto the [2] brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast Him down headlong. [2] Or, *edge.*

30 But He [q] passing through the midst of them went His way, [q] John 8. 59. & 10. 39.

31 and [r] came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the sabbath days. [r] Matt. 4. 13. Mark 1. 21.

32 And they were astonished at His doctrine: [s] for His word was with power. [s] Matt. 7. 28, 29. Titus 2. 15.

33 ¶ And in the synagogue there was a man, which had a spirit of an unclean devil, and cried out with a loud voice, A.D. 28.

34 saying, [3] Let *us* alone; what have we to do with Thee, *Thou* Jesus of Nazareth? art Thou come to destroy us? [t] I know Thee who Thou art; [u] the Holy One of God. [3] Or, *Away.* [t] ver. 41. [u] Ps. 16. 10. Dan. 9. 24. ch. 1. 35.

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28. "**Filled with wrath.**" Because they understood our Lord's meaning, and knew that He was rebuking them for their unbelief and hardness of heart.

29. "**Rose up, and thrust Him out.**" Thus was He "despised "and rejected of men (Isaiah liii. 3.). "He came unto His own, "and His own received Him not" (St. John i. 11.). We may notice that the Jews rose up full of wrath against St. Paul, when he spoke of being sent to the Gentiles, saying, "Away with such a fellow from "the earth; for it is not fit that he should live" (Acts xxii. 21, 22.).

"**The brow of the hill.**" Nazareth was built on a range of hills, and near to it is a cliff or precipice, thirty or forty feet high,—doubtless that over which they purposed to cast Jesus down. This murderous rage of the Nazarenes is very fearful. May it not teach us to what actual hatred of Christ we may come if we have been very familiar with Him—in His word, and Church, and Sacraments,—and yet have never learnt truly to love Him and believe in Him?

30. "**Passing through the midst.**" By a miracle, probably making Himself invisible, and so escaping their wrath (See on xxiv. 31. and St. John v. 13. and viii. 59.).

31. "**Down to Capernaum.**" Nazareth being on a hill, and Capernaum on the border of the Lake, it was natural to speak of going down. (For Capernaum see on St. Matt. iv. 13.)

33—37. The casting out of a devil in the synagogue at Capernaum.

St. Mark i. 21—28.

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32. "*His word was with power.*" See on St. Matt. vii. 28, 29.

A. D. 28.

35 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the devil had thrown him in the midst, he came out of him, and hurt him not.

36 And they were all amazed, and spake among themselves, saying, What a word *is* this! for with authority and power He commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out.

37 And the fame of Him went out into every place of the country round about.

38 ¶ And He arose out of the synagogue, and entered into Simon's house. And Simon's wife's mother was taken with a great fever; and they besought Him for her.

39 And He stood over her, and rebuked the fever; and it left her: and immediately she arose and ministered unto them.

40 Now when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto Him; and He laid His hands on every one of them, and healed them.

x Mark 3. 11.

41 x And devils also came out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ the Son of God. And y He rebuking *them* suffered them not z to speak: for they knew that He was Christ.

y ver. 34, 35.

z Or, *to say that they knew Him to be Christ.*

42 ¶ And when it was day, He departed and

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35. "**Hurt him not.**" So when Satan departs from the sinner whom he has held in his power, the struggle may be fierce, and the pain great, yet he will have no power really to hurt him.

38—41. The healing of St. Peter's mother-in-law, and others.

St. Matt. viii. 14—17. St. Mark i. 29—34.

38. "**A great fever.**" That is, a very severe heavy fever.

41. "**Thou art Christ the Son of God.**" The devils not only knew Christ, but were also constrained to give utterance to their knowledge (See on St. Mark i. 24, 25.).

42—44. Christ retires to pray, and preaches throughout Galilee.

St. Mark i. 35—39.

42. "**When it was day.**" As soon as day dawned:—according to

went into a desert place: and the people sought Him, and came unto Him, and stayed Him, that He should not depart from them. A.D. 28.

43 And He said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent.

44 And He preached in the synagogues of Galilee.

CHAPTER V.

1 *Christ teacheth the people out of Peter's ship.* 4 *in a miraculous taking of fishes, sheweth how He will make him and his partners fishers of men:* 12 *cleanseth the leper:* 16 *prayeth in the wilderness:* 18 *healeth one sick of the palsy:* 27 *calleth Matthew the publican:* 29 *eateth with sinners, as being the Physician of souls:* 34 *foretelleth the fastings and afflictions of the apostles after his ascension:* 36 *and likeneth fainthearted and weak disciples to old bottles and worn garments.*

AND it came to pass, that, as the people pressed upon Him to hear the word of God, He stood by the lake of Gennesaret,

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St. Mark "a great while before day,"—which may mean a long while before the beginning of the ordinary working day, which began, as with us, at six o'clock in the morning.

"The people." Led, as St. Mark shows, by Simon Peter and other disciples.

"Stayed Him." That is, they tried to stay Him, praying Him to remain with them.

CHAPTER V.

1—11. The first miraculous draught of fishes, and the calling of St. Peter and the Sons of Zebedee from their trade.

St. Matt. iv. 18—22. St. Mark i. 16—20. Compare the Miracle related in St. John xxi. 1—14, and the Parable in St. Matt. xiii. 47—50.

1. "He stood by the lake" &c. This was a favourite place of our Lord. It was on the shore of this lake that the seven parables of St. Matt. xiii. were spoken.

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1. "*It came to pass,*" *&c.* Some have held that this event is a different one from that related by St. Matthew and St. Mark in the passages above referred to. Certainly this account is not only much fuller than the others, but seemingly different in some particulars. However it is very improbable that what is recorded in 10, 11, which answers closely to St. Matt. iv. 19, 20, and St. Mark i. 17, 18, could have occurred on two separate occasions. The main difficulties in supposing the three accounts to be accounts of the same thing are—1. that St. Matthew and St. Mark do not allude to the miracle here related, but simply represent the Apostles as fishing; and 2. that St. Mark relates the healing of the man with the unclean spirit in the synagogue at Capernaum as taking place immediately after this call of the fishermen, while St. Luke relates it before (namely in iv. 31—36.). It is however so continually the case that different events are related by the different Evangelists, and different particulars of the same event, that, though the omission of the miracle in St. Matthew and St. Mark may seem strange, it cannot really perplex us; and as to the second objection the Evangelists most clearly do not aim at giving the events they relate in their

A. D. 28. 2 and saw two ships standing by the lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing *their* nets.

3 And He entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And He sat down, and taught the people out of the ship.

4 Now when He had left speaking, He said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught.

5 And Simon answering said unto Him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at Thy word I will let down the net.

6 And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake.

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2. "The fishermen." Not yet called Apostles, for though two of them at any rate had already been called to be disciples (See St. John i. 40—43.), they had not yet been called to leave their trade and to follow Christ more closely.

"Washing their nets." This implies that their work for the time was over.

3. "He entered into one" &c. So when He spoke the seven parables (St. Matt. xiii. 2.) He sat in a ship while the people stood on the shore. The ship would be thrust only a few yards from the land, just sufficiently to keep the people from pressing too near.

4. "Launch out" &c. Our Lord's first important act with those who were to be the nearest to Himself was the same as that which was almost His last (See St. John xxi.), and in each He makes His miracle a parable, teaching His Apostles wonderful lessons concerning His Church.

5. "Master," &c. The word "Master," together with the seeming expectation of a miracle in the words, "Nevertheless at Thy word" &c., show that St. Peter was already a disciple of our Lord (See on 2.). Night was usually the best time for fishing, yet the fishermen caught nothing till Christ came. So Christ's ministers will labour in vain, however hopeful their labour may seem, except Christ be with them. "Except the Lord build the house, their labour is but lost that build "it" (Ps. cxxvii. 1.).

6. "They inclosed" &c. It has been often asked whether this was a miracle of Omnipotence or of Omniscience, of power or of wisdom; that is, whether the Lord compelled the fish to come to the net, or, knowing where the fish were, guided the fishermen to the spot. It is in vain to ask, or to try to answer, such a question. Either opinion is

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exact order, and here St. Luke has given the healing of the man with an unclean spirit in the synagogue *before* its proper place in the history (for St. Mark says clearly that it was *after* the call of the fishermen), probably because in the passage following the Temptation (that is, the remainder of ch. iv.) he is principally speaking of our Lord's visits to the "synagogues of Galilee" (iv. 44.).

7 And they beckoned unto *their* partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink. A. D. 28.

8 When Simon Peter saw *it*, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, [a] Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord. [a] 2 Sam. 6. 9. 1 Kings 17. 18.

9 For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken:

10 and so *was* also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.

11 And when they had brought their ships to land, [b] they forsook all, and followed Him. [b] Mat. 19. 27. ch. 18. 28.

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perfectly lawful, but it is better not to seek to be wise above that which is written. Yet it is written of the Lord by the prophet, "Thou madest "Him to have dominion over the works of Thy Hands; Thou hast put "all things under His Feet; . . the fowl of the air, and the fish of "the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas" (Ps. viii. 6, 8.).

"Their net brake." Literally 'was breaking', that is, just on the point of breaking, or beginning to break. (For a spiritual application of this and other parts of the miracle see on St. John xxi. 11.)

8. **"Depart from me;" &c.** It is most natural for the sinful soul to shrink from the presence of the All-holy. A consciousness of God's nearness and power and purity will at first make the sinner fear. Yet fear will often lead to love, and Simon Peter soon found by a blessed experience that "perfect love casteth out fear" (1 St. John iv. 18.).

9. **"All that were with him."** Among whom was his own brother Andrew (See St. Matth. iv. 18.).

10. **"Fear not."** This was Christ's comforting answer to St. Peter's "Depart from me." When the shrinking from Christ springs from a self-accusing self-condemning spirit, then He cheers and comforts, and bids us "Fear not."

"From henceforth" &c. This is spoken here in the singular to St. Peter. In St. Matthew and St. Mark it is spoken in the plural to all the four disciples. It is easy to understand that our Lord may have thus addressed St. Peter first, and then have made known to the rest that His words equally applied to them. We may be sure much more passed than is related. The Evangelists continually give only an outline of that which they record. How would St. Peter be reminded of this miracle and its promise in the miraculous ingathering of three thousand souls on the day of Pentecost (Acts ii. 41.)!

11. **"They forsook all," &c.** This alone proves that our Lord's words to Simon Peter were not His only words on the subject. Doubtless He similarly invited all the four, describing the work in store for them in like manner to all. They were all to be "fishers of men."

A. D. 28. 12 ¶ And it came to pass, when He was in a certain city, behold a man full of leprosy: who seeing Jesus fell on *his* face, and besought Him, saying, Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean.

13 And He put forth *His* hand, and touched him, saying, I will: be thou clean. And immediately the leprosy departed from him.

14 And He charged him to tell no man: but go, and shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing, [c] according as Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

[c] Lev. 14. 4, 10, 21, 22.

15 But so much the more went there a fame abroad of Him: [d] and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by Him of their infirmities.

[d] Matt. 4. 25. Mark 3. 7. John 6. 2.

16 [e] And He withdrew Himself into the wilderness, and prayed.

[e] Matt. 14. 23. Mark 6. 46.

A. D. 29. 17 ¶ And it came to pass on a certain day, as He was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judæa, and Jeru-

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12—16. Healing of a Leper.

St. Matt. viii. 2—4. St. Mark i. 40—45.

15. "So much the more" &c. "Fame" means a 'report.' The miracle was noised about, and much talked of. St. Mark tells us this was owing to the conduct of the man who had been healed.

"To hear, and to be healed." Probably this refers to those who came to Him in the "desert places," for in the town the multitudes were so great as to be a serious hindrance (See St. Mark i. 45.), and the latter flocked together from idle curiosity, and not "to hear and "to be healed." The following our Lord into the wilderness was a pledge of sincerity.

17—26. Healing of the Paralytic man at Capernaum.

St. Matt. ix. 1—8. St. Mark ii. 1—12.

17. "Come out of every town" &c. The fame of Jesus had already spread far and wide. The Pharisees and doctors (See on ii. 46.) flocked to hear and see Him, their enmity not as yet aroused by His exposure of their pride and hypocrisy, and by the disappointment of their expectation of a temporal deliverer. Yet is their doubt and jealousy of our Lord shown in their very posture; for "while the multitude are throng-"ing Him with every sign of amazement and fear, they are *sitting* "*by* and watching Him" (*Is. Williams.*).

salem: and the power of the Lord was *present* to heal them. A. D. 28.

18 And, behold, men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a palsy: and they sought *means* to bring him in, and to lay *him* before Him.

19 And when they could not find by what *way* they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went upon the housetop, and let him down through the tiling with *his* couch into the midst before Jesus.

20 And when He saw their faith, He said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee.

21 And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? [f] Who can forgive sins, but God alone?

[f] Ps. 32. 5. Isai. 43. 25.

22 But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, He answering said unto them, What reason ye in your hearts?

23 Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk?

24 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins, (He said unto the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house.

25 And immediately he rose up before them, and took up that whereon he lay, and departed to his own house, glorifying God.

"The power of the Lord" &c. That is, the power of God, displayed in His Son. This power was "present to heal them"—that is, not the Pharisees and doctors, but the poor sufferers who crowded there to be healed. The Scribes and Pharisees indeed had sore need of healing, but they knew it not. They thought themselves whole, and in no need of the Physician (See 31, and on St. Matt. ix. 12.).

19. "Through the tiling." Perhaps the most natural explanation of this is that which supposes our Lord to have been in a room, possibly an upper room, or the room of a one-storied house, and not in a court such as would be found in houses of a better sort, and that the men who carried the poor paralytic actually broke away some of the tiles or slabs, which covered the roof, and also a part of the ceiling over our Lord's head, which may have been merely boarded with planks.

25. "Departed." We can easily suppose that the crowd which was a bar to the poor man's being carried into Christ's presence, would now make way for him, as for one supremely honoured and blest. All eyes would be upon him; all would be silent with awe as he passed along carrying his mattress, and glorifying God, who had shown such mercy upon both soul and body.

A. D. 28. 26 And they were all amazed, and they glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things to day.

27 ¶ And after these things He went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and He said unto him, Follow Me.

28 And he left all, rose up, and followed Him.

29 And Levi made Him a great feast in his own house: and [g] there was a great company of publicans and of others that sat down with them.

g ch. 15. 1.

30 But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against His disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners?

31 And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick.

32 [h] I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

h 1 Tim. 1. 15.

33 ¶ And they said unto Him, Why do the dis-

27—32. The Calling and Feast of St. Matthew.

St. Matt. ix. 9—13. St. Mark ii. 13—17.

27. "Saw." The original word means much more than simply "saw." It is rather, He 'looked earnestly upon' (See on St. Matt. xix. 26.).

28. "Left all." This is named only in this Gospel, though of course understood in the others. St. Matthew gave up all earthly riches to receive "an hundredfold now," "and in the world to come eternal "life" (See on St. Mark x. 28—30.).

30. "Why do ye" &c. But especially, as we see from the other Gospels, *your Master*. The Pharisees thought men professing so great holiness were inconsistent in suffering the presence of acknowledged sinners. They needed indeed to learn the meaning of the words, "I "will have mercy and not sacrifice."

33—39. Discourse upon Fasting.

St. Matt. ix. 14—17. St. Mark ii. 18—22.

33. "They said." That is, the Scribes and Pharisees (30.). St. Matthew says the disciples of John asked this question. St. Mark explains this seeming difference by saying that *both* asked the question. That the disciples of St. John the Baptist should appear here on the side of the Pharisees against Christ seems strange; but we must observe that there is no *unfriendly* opposition spoken of. In this one matter of practice the strictness of St. John's life and teaching made his disciples join with the Pharisees in asking for an explanation of our Lord's less

ciples of John fast often, and make prayers, and likewise *the disciples* of the Pharisees; but Thine eat and drink? A. D. 28.

34 And He said unto them, Can ye make the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them?

35 But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days.

36 And He spake also a parable unto them; No man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old; if otherwise, then both the new maketh a rent, and the piece that was *taken* out of the new agreeth not with the old.

37 And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish.

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severe rule of life. It has been suggested as possible that the feast in St. Matthew's house took place upon a day observed as a fast by the disciples of St. John the Baptist and the Pharisees.

"Make prayers." That is, prayers of unusual length, and at stated hours. The aim of the Pharisee was to spend so much time in prayer: the Christian would "pray without ceasing," living in the spirit of prayer. The Pharisee strictly observed his appointed fasts. The Christian seeks to be "temperate in all things." In saying this it is not meant that Christ would discourage in His followers either stated hours of prayer, or stated fasts such as the Church enjoins. Only He would discourage the *formal* observance of such, and show, as in the case of the observance of the sabbath, that ordinances, good in themselves, must be governed by the higher laws of a more spiritual religion.

36. "A piece of a new garment." St. Matthew and St. Mark have "a piece of new *cloth*." In the "garment" we get a new idea, for it teaches us whence the "new cloth" is taken. The "new garment" is the Gospel, and the piece taken from it represents any portion of the spirit of the Gospel, which it is attempted to blend with the old Law.

"Both the new maketh a rent." That is, as in the two former Gospels, by its strength and firmness pulling away and tearing the weak material into which it is sewn. But these words might be still better translated, 'He both rendeth the new,' that is, he tears and spoils the new garment, out of which the piece was taken, and that without improving the old, since the two agree not together.

37. "New wine into old bottles." This pictures the attempt to pour the free spirit of the Gospel into the forms and ceremonies of the Law. These were only for a time, and to educate God's people for the nobler manhood of Christianity. This, being a life of faith and love and grace, neither needs, nor can make use of, the system of minute observances, upon which the Jew relied for acceptance.

If we interpret the bottles (as many do, and as it is very allowable to do,) of *persons* rather than of *ordinances*, then the meaning would be

A. D. 28.

38 But new wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved.

39 No man also having drunk old *wine* straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better.

CHAPTER VI.

1 *Christ reproveth the Pharisees' blindness about the observation of the sabbath, by scripture, reason, and miracle:* 13 *chooseth twelve apostles:* 17 *healeth the diseased:* 20 *preacheth to His disciples before the people of blessings and curses:* 27 *how we must love our enemies:* 46 *and join the obedience of good works to the hearing of the word: lest in the evil day of temptation we fall like an house built upon the face of the earth, without any foundation.*

AND it came to pass on the second sabbath after the first, that He went through the corn fields; and His disciples plucked the ears of corn, and did eat, rubbing *them* in *their* hands.

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that it is vain to expect those clinging to a religion of ceremonies (like the Galatians) to possess the spiritual life and freedom of the new covenant. If they once really embrace the new, the old must pass away. May we not apply this figure to those in these days who, having been brought up in ignorance, or having lived in sin, have at length embraced some portion of Christian truth, but, being unable to give to that truth its proper place and proportion, have carried it, or have been carried by it, into foolish extremes, hurtful to their own souls? The new wine is too strong for the old bottles.

38. "New bottles." If the "new wine" is the new living vigorous spirit of the Gospel (See on St. Matt.), then we may gather from this verse that *some* ordinances are needful for the preservation and safety of this spirit. But these ordinances must be such as agree with that new spirit. Christ does not say, the new wine will need no bottles at all, but, "New wine must be put into *new* bottles."

Taking the bottles of *persons*, it has been well remarked that what the Jews said mockingly, we may say in a true sense of Christians renewed by God's grace,—"These men are full of new wine" (Acts ii. 13.), even the "new wine" of the blessed Spirit of God.

39. "No man also" &c. This (which is only found in St. Luke) gives the reason why the Pharisees and the Baptist's disciples could not understand the freedom from ceremonial restraints with which Jesus and His disciples acted. These complainers had drunk the old wine of the Law, and they could scarcely be expected all at once to see the greater merit of the new wine of the Gospel. They said, "The old "is better." But those who have really tasted the new, which Jesus provides, say, "Thou hast kept the good wine until now" (St. John ii. 10.).

1—5. The plucking of corn on the Sabbath.

St. Matt. xii. 1—8. St. Mark ii. 23—28.

1. "On the second sabbath after the first." In the Greek this is simply, 'On the second-first sabbath.' It is unknown what this means. Various suggestions have been made. Among these one of the simplest

2 And certain of the Pharisees said unto them, A. D. 28.
Why do ye that [a] which is not lawful to do on the [a] Ex. 20. 10.
sabbath days?

3 And Jesus answering them said, Have ye not
read so much as this, [b] what David did, when him- [b] 1 Sam. 21. 6.
self was an hungred, and they which were with him;

4 how he went into the house of God, and did
take and eat the shewbread, and gave also to them
that were with him; [c] which it is not lawful to eat [c] Lev. 24. 9.
but for the priests alone?

5 And He said unto them, That the Son of man
is Lord also of the sabbath.

6 ¶ [d] And it came to pass also on another [d] See ch. 13. 14. & 14. 3. John 9. 16.
sabbath, that He entered into the synagogue and
taught: and there was a man whose right hand
was withered.

7 And the scribes and Pharisees watched Him,
whether He would heal on the sabbath day; that
they might find an accusation against Him.

8 But He knew their thoughts, and said to the
man which had the withered hand, Rise up, and
stand forth in the midst. And he arose and stood
forth.

9 Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one
thing; Is it lawful on the sabbath days to do good,
or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy *it*?

10 And looking round about upon them all, He
said unto the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And
he did so: and his hand was restored whole as
the other.

11 And they were filled with madness; and com-
muned one with another what they might do to
Jesus.

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is that certain sabbaths were called 'first' or 'chief' sabbaths, and that this was the second of such chief sabbaths. As the year began with the Passover, the sabbath of the Paschal-week would be the first chief sabbath (See on St. John xix. 31.), and probably the sabbath at the Pentecost, or feast of First-fruits, would be the second. This would accord with the fact that the corn was ripe in the fields.

6—11. Healing of the man with the withered hand.

St. Matt. xii. 9—14. St. Mark iii. 1—6. Compare also xiv. 1—6.

11. "Madness." That is, a senseless rage against Christ.

A.D. 28. 12 ¶ [e] And it came to pass in those days, that He
[e] Matt. 14. 23. went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.

13 And when it was day, He called *unto Him* His disciples: and of them He chose twelve, whom also He named apostles;

[f] John 1. 42. 14 Simon, ([f] whom He also named Peter,) and Andrew his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew,

15 Matthew and Thomas, James the *son* of Alphæus, and Simon called Zelotes,

[g] Jude 1. 16 and Judas [g] *the brother* of James, and Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor.

A.D. 28. 17 ¶ And He came down with them, and stood
[h] Matt. 4. 25. Mark 3. 7. in the plain, and the company of His disciples, [h] and

12—16. Calling of the Twelve Apostles.

St. Matt. x. 1—4. St. Mark iii. 13—19.

12. "All night in prayer." Can we contemplate our great Example thus spending the whole night in prayer, and feel no shame when we think of the short space we allot to the same holy intercourse with our heavenly Father? And let us remember, we *need* prayer in a manner in which He could never need it; for we are sinners, and He was without sin (See on St. Matt. iv. 2.).

13. "He chose twelve." The chief of them common fishermen, one a publican, all from the lower ranks of life. These princes of the kingdom of heaven were not "wise men after the flesh," nor "mighty," nor "noble," for "God hath chosen the foolish things of the "world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things "of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base "things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, "yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are" (1 Cor. i. 26—28.).

"He named apostles." The word 'Apostle' means 'sent forth,' and answers to our word 'missionary,' except that, of course, the title 'Apostle' implies the high dignity of one sent forth by Christ Himself, and appointed by Him to be a missionary founder of His kingdom.

17—49. The Sermon on the Mount.

St. Matt. v—vii.

17—20. Introduction.

St. Matt. v. 1, 2.

17. "In the plain." Literally 'on a level place' (See *Note*.).

17—49. The question whether St. Luke is here giving a brief summary of the Sermon on the Mount (St. Matt. v—vii), or relating a different discourse, has been much discussed, and probably must always remain an open question, upon

a great multitude of people out of all Judæa and Jerusalem, and from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear Him, and to be healed of their diseases; A.D. 28.

18 and they that were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed.

19 And the whole multitude [i] sought to touch Him: for [k] there went virtue out of Him, and healed *them* all.

[i] Matt. 14. 36.
[k] Mark 5. 30. ch. 8. 46.

20 ¶ And He lifted up His eyes on His disciples, and said, [l] Blessed *be ye* poor: for your's is the kingdom of God.

[l] Matt. 11. 5. James 2. 5.

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19. "Virtue." That is, healing power (See on St. Mark v. 30.).

20—23. The Beatitudes.

St. Matt. v. 3—12.

20. "He lifted up His eyes." Fixing on His disciples an intent and earnest gaze, to rivet their attention, before He "opened His mouth "and taught them" (See on St. Matt. xix. 26.).

"Blessed be ye poor." As "the poor" in iv. 18. is explained by referring to Isaiah, where we read "the meek," so here "ye poor" is explained by referring to St. Matthew, where we read "the poor in "spirit." Still the thought of earthly poverty is not to be shut out, since the "poor" in this verse is opposed to the "rich" in verse 24, and the latter can hardly refer only to a spiritual state. We must however remember that earthly poverty has no blessing apart from poverty of spirit.

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which different opinions may be formed. We need not however feel much difficulty in accepting the two accounts as different versions of the same discourse, if we remember two things:—1. That throughout the Gospels the object of the inspired Evangelists is plainly "not so "much to confine our minds to one set "of *words*, as if they were or could be "a full exponent of Christ's meaning, "as to declare what was in the *mind* of "Christ. The Holy Spirit who inspired "the Evangelists knew what was in "Christ's mind, and by presenting the "same substantial truth with circum-"stantial varieties, and in different points "of view, He has given a clearer view "of that mind than if He had given one "view only" (*Wordsworth*. See also *Note* on St. Matt. viii. 25.). 2. That the Evangelists, writing for different classes of readers, would be led to select those parts of our Lord's teaching most needful for those whom they had in view. Thus in the present case it is easily seen that St. Matthew gives, and St. Luke omits, various matters which were specially suitable to Jewish readers.

A difficulty has been raised upon the words "stood in the plain" (17.), which certainly seem at first sight opposed to St. Matthew's statement that our Lord was sitting upon a mountain. But this difficulty vanishes when we look to the Greek, and find that what is translated "the plain" is literally 'a level place,' and would quite naturally mean a flat space upon the hill side, such as would be most suitable for His purpose, and to which He would descend from the higher part of the mountain, where He had spent the night in prayer, and whither He had called up His Apostles. While, as to the standing and sitting, St. Luke does not say that Jesus stood while He taught, but only while the multitudes came to Him to be healed, after which He would probably find a spot slightly raised above the 'level place,' where He could, according to the Jewish custom, sit down to address His hearers.

A.D. 28.

21 [m] Blessed *are ye* that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. [n] Blessed *are ye* that weep now: for ye shall laugh.

22 [o] Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they [p] shall separate you *from their company*, and shall reproach *you*, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake.

23 [q] Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward *is* great in heaven: for [r] in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.

24 ¶ [s] But woe unto you [t] that are rich! for [u] ye have received your consolation.

m Isai. 55. 1. & 65. 13.
n Isai. 61. 3.
o 1 Pet. 2. 19. & 3. 14. & 4. 14.
p John 16. 2.
q Acts 5. 41. Col. 1. 24. James 1. 2.
r Acts 7. 51.
s Amos 6. 1. James 5. 1.
t ch. 12. 21.
u ch. 16. 25.

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21. "Ye that hunger." Here again St. Matthew speaks of spiritual hunger, and of that is the Beatitude most fully and eternally true. Yet again the thought of a lowly worldly estate with the patient endurance of privations need not be shut out. The shadow has its blessedness as well as the substance. Is it not true that they who have experience of bodily hunger are the most likely to crave for the heavenly food?

"Ye that weep." Again, all sorrow may be blest. "They that sow "in tears" may, if they will, "reap in joy." But of all sorrow spiritual sorrow—that is, sorrow for sin—is the most surely and the most richly blest.

22. "When men shall hate you," &c. Observe well, all this must be "for the Son of man's sake," or it misses the blessing. There is a self-chosen persecution which is wilfulness, and a self-inflicted martyrdom which is pride. It has been well pointed out what dignity and greatness our Lord claims in these words "for the Son of man's "sake." It is blessed even to *suffer* for Him.

24—26. Woes corresponding to the Beatitudes.

24. "Woe unto you that are rich!" The beatitudes and woes stand over against one another like Mount Ebal and Gerizim, from which the blessings and the cursings were read aloud to the Israelites (See Deut. xi. 29. Josh. viii. 33, 34.). By the "rich" here must be understood those "that *trust* in riches" (St. Mark x. 24. See on St. Matt. xix. 23.). It is plain that the "rich" does not naturally suggest to us those who are proud and self-satisfied *in spirit*—the opposite to the "poor *in spirit*"—but must signify those possessing and trusting in actual worldly riches; which is the reason why it is said above (on 20.) that the thought of worldly poverty must not be shut out in speaking of the blessedness of the "poor."

"Ye have received your consolation." No better comment on

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24. "*But woe*" *&c.* St. Luke gives only four 'beatitudes' instead of the eight of St. Matthew, but adds four 'woes' which St. Matthew does not give. This is the most important variation in the whole discourse. It is quite possible to suppose that our Lord enlarged upon each beatitude, as He spoke it, showing the opposite truth to it in the shape of these 'woes', for we need not suppose that St. Matthew's longer account records all our Lord spoke on the occasion.

25 [x] Woe unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger. [y] Woe unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep. A. D. 28.
[x] Isai. 65. 13.
[y] Prov. 14. 13.

26 [z] Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.
[z] John 15. 19. 1 John 4. 5.

27 ¶ [a] But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you,
[a] ver. 35. Exod. 23. 4. Prov. 25. 21. Rom. 12. 20.

these words can be found than that which our Lord gives in the Parable of the Rich man and Lazarus (See on xvi. 25.). They are like the words "They have their reward," spoken of the hypocrites who did their religious acts to be seen of men (St. Matt. vi. 2, 5, 16.). These sought the praise of men, and they got it. So the rich sought the consolation of earthly riches, and they got it. Yet we cannot but reflect how poor was that reward, when won, and how hollow this consolation when received (See St. James v. 1—3.).

25. "You that are full!" &c. Again, what comment on these words like the Parable of the Rich man and Lazarus? He that "fared "sumptuously every day" craved a drop of cold water to cool his parched tongue. God hath indeed "filled the hungry with good things, and the "rich He hath sent empty away" (i. 53.).

"You that laugh." This is no condemnation of innocent mirth and light-heartedness, but only of the godless merriment of the wicked. "A man's attire, and excessive laughter, and gait, show what he is" (Ecclus. xix. 30.).

26. "When all men shall speak well of you." We must not forget that these 'woes', as well as the rest of the discourse, are addressed, at any rate in the first instance, to the disciples, warning them, and through them warning the Church, against states of peculiar danger. Thus this fourth woe should be a special warning to all Christian ministers against the peril of popularity. There is a middle course, which the Christian will seek to keep, between courting persecution (See on 22.) and courting popularity. If pride and obstinacy are dangers on one side, on the other side there may be a carelessness as to the truth, an easy compliance with the low standard of the world, a shrinking from duties which would be unpopular in their performance. The right course is humbly to seek to know and to do God's will, not on the one side needlessly offending a weak brother, nor on the other side shrinking from what is right through fear of man.

"The false prophets." Who cried, "Peace, peace, when there was "no peace" (Jer. vi. 14. viii. 11. Ezek. xiii. 10.). Mark the terrible description given by Jeremiah of a time of great wickedness and degradation:—"A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the "land; the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their "means; and My people love to have it so" (Jer. v. 30, 31.).

27—36. The Law of Love and the Law of Retaliation.

St. Matt. v. 38—48.

27. It is plain, if we compare this with St. Matthew, that there is a great break between the last verse and this, St. Luke selecting parts here and there of our Lord's teaching.

A. D. 28.

28 bless them that curse you, and [b] pray for them which despitefully use you.

[b] ch. 23. 34. Acts 7. 60.

29 And unto him that smiteth thee on the *one* cheek offer also the other; [c] and him that taketh away thy cloke forbid not *to take thy* coat also.

[c] 1 Cor. 6. 7.

30 [d] Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask *them* not again.

[d] Deut. 15. 7, 8, 10. Prov. 21. 26.

31 And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.

32 For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them.

33 And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same.

34 And if ye lend *to them* of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again.

[e] ver. 27.

35 But [e] love ye your enemies, and do good, and [f] lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for He is kind unto the unthankful and *to* the evil.

[f] ver. 30. Ps. 37. 26.

36 Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

37 ¶ Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven:

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30. "**Of him that taketh away thy goods**" &c. This does not seem to refer so much to actual stealing as to any wrongful dealing by which we may suffer loss. A man is very apt to think and talk much of his *rights*, and to profess that he is bound to stand up for his *rights*, and not to suffer his *rights* to be trampled upon. But let the Christian ask, What is his *right?* Is it not to show mercy, and love, and forbearance, and forgiveness? Let him stand up for *this right*, and he will do well.

32. "**What thank have ye?**" This is the same as "What reward "have ye?" (St. Matt. v. 46.), and "What glory is it?" (1 St. Pet. ii. 20.), and means 'Ye are doing nothing meritorious—nothing to boast of.'

37—42. Charity and Wisdom in dealing with others.

St. Matt. vii. 1—6.

38 [g] give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your [h] bosom. For [i] with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

A.D. 28.

[g] Prov. 19. 17.
[h] Ps. 79. 12.
[i] Mark 4. 24. James 2. 13.

39 And He spake a parable unto them, [k] Can the blind lead the blind? shall they not both fall into the ditch?

[k] Matt. 15. 14.
[l] Matt. 10. 24. John 13. 16. & 15. 20.

40 [l] The disciple is not above his master: but every one [2] that is perfect shall be as his master.

[2] Or, *shall be perfected as his master.*

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38. "Good measure, pressed down," &c. This is a beautiful addition recorded in this Gospel only. The figure is taken from the filling of a measure with corn, and the meaning is, that our gifts will be repaid, not by strict measure, but by the overflowing bounty of God's mercy in the Day of reward.

"Shall men give." The word "men" does not exist in the original. It would therefore have been better, either to print it in Italics (See on St. Matt. xxvi. 5.), or to omit it altogether in the English, translating simply 'shall *they* give,' the sense plainly being merely 'shall be given,' without stating by whom. We may however understand it of God Himself, or of the holy Angels who shall receive the redeemed into the joy of their Lord.

"With the same measure" &c. Observe how our Lord applies this same figure to the measure of profit with which we hear God's word (St. Mark iv. 24.). If it be asked, How can the immensity of the eternal reward, as compared with the poverty of our acts of charity, be spoken of as measured "with the same measure"? We answer, Because "he which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which "soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully" (2 Cor. ix. 6.). The "*same*" measure does not mean one equal in size, but *proportionately* great or small.

39. "Can the blind" &c. Neither this short parable, nor the saying in the next verse, is found in the Sermon on the Mount in St. Matthew's Gospel. It is not improbable that both may have been frequently used by our Lord. This "parable" of the blind leading the blind is spoken on another occasion concerning the false teaching of the Pharisees (See St. Matt. xv. 14.). Here it seems used as a warning to the disciples that, if they would guide others safely, they must take care that they are themselves well instructed in the truth.

40. "The disciple is not above." This is a saying repeated by our Lord on several occasions, and with different applications (See on St. Matt. x. 24.). Here it seems closely connected with the saying as to the blind leading the blind, and would thus mean, You cannot expect the disciple to escape where the master falls, for the disciple is not likely to be better instructed than his master. The best and most perfect disciple is only equal to his master: he can learn no more than his master can teach. Therefore be careful to gain wisdom to enable you to lead your disciples aright. In the latter part of the verse we may

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40. "*Perfect.*" See on St. Matt. v. 48.

A.D. 28. 41 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

42 Either how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, [m] cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye.

m See Prov. 18. 17.

43 ¶ For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

n Matt. 12. 33. 44 For [n] every tree is known by his own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they [2] grapes.

2 Gr. *a grape.*

o Matt. 12. 35. 45 [o] A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for [p] of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

p Matt. 12. 34.

q Mal. 1. 6. Matt. 25. 11. ch. 13. 25. 46 ¶ [q] And why call ye Me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?

47 Whosoever cometh to Me, and heareth My sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like:

48 he is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehe-

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perhaps suppose our Lord to convey a double meaning, namely, that the disciples must not only take care to excel their own pupils, if they would be safe teachers and guides, but also remember that they are themselves but pupils of the One great Master, whom they must ever strive to imitate. The best guide of others is he who most closely follows Christ: the best master is the best disciple.

43—45. False Prophets and their fruits.
St. Matt. vii. 15—20.

46—49. No safety but in obedience.
St. Matt. vii. 21—27.

48. "Digged deep." This implies labour and pains; but what labour and pains are ill spent if they bring us to the Rock of our salvation?

mently upon that house, and could not shake it: A. D. 28.
for it was founded upon a rock.

49 But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great.

CHAPTER VII.

1 *Christ findeth a greater faith in the centurion a Gentile, than in any of the Jews:* 10 *healeth his servant being absent:* 11 *raiseth from death the widow's son at Nain:* 19 *answereth John's messengers with the declaration of His miracles:* 24 *testifieth to the people what opinion He held of John:* 30 *inveigheth against the Jews, who with neither the manners of John nor of Jesus could be won:* 36 *and sheweth by occasion of Mary Magdalene, how He is a friend to sinners, not to maintain them in sins, but to forgive them their sins, upon their faith and repentance.*

NOW when He had ended all His sayings in the audience of the people, He entered into Capernaum.

2 And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto him, was sick, and ready to die.

3 And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto Him the elders of the Jews, beseeching Him that He would come and heal his servant.

4 And when they came to Jesus, they besought Him instantly, saying, That he was worthy for whom He should do this:

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49. "He that heareth, and doeth not." Surely this is the great peril of days when there is so much *hearing* as in these. If some rest in pious words, saying, "Lord, Lord" (46.), how many are there who rest in the mere *hearing* of the Gospel, listening to Sermons, and yet never doing what they hear!

CHAPTER VII.

1—10. The Centurion's servant healed.

St. Matt. viii. 5—13.

2. "Who was dear unto him." This is worthy of notice as a mark of unusual kindliness and tenderness in an age when servants were really slaves, and treated with much hardness.

"Sick, and ready to die." He was "sick of the palsy, grievously "tormented," as St. Matthew tells us.

3. "The elders of the Jews." The Centurion, who was plainly a proselyte or convert to the Jewish religion (See on St. Matt. xxiii. 15.), sent these elders to plead for him as a more respectful way of approaching Christ than if he had come himself in person. He felt himself unworthy to ask so great a favour, and thought perhaps it would be more readily granted to these Jewish elders than to himself a Gentile (See 7.).

A. D. 28. 5 for he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue.

6 Then Jesus went with them. And when He was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to Him, saying unto Him, Lord, trouble not Thyself: for I am not worthy that Thou shouldest enter under my roof:

7 wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto Thee: but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed.

8 For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto [2] one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth *it*.

[2] Gr. *this man.*

9 When Jesus heard these things, He marvelled at him, and turned Him about, and said unto the people that followed Him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.

10 And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick.

11 ¶ And it came to pass the day after, that He went into a city called Nain; and many of His disciples went with Him, and much people.

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4. "**Instantly.**" That is, very earnestly or pressingly.

5. "**He hath built us a synagogue.**" Literally our synagogue. He had given the same proof of his love to the Jewish faith, as some convert from heathenism to Christianity would, if he built a church at his own expence.

6. "**Sent friends.**" Again St. Luke is more minute than St. Matthew, who only says, "The centurion answered and said." We here learn that this answer was sent by others, doubtless for the same reason which induced him to send the "elders" at first, namely that given by himself in his message by these friends.

7. "**Wherefore neither thought I**" &c. This gives the clue to the centurion's conduct in sending, instead of coming, to our Lord. His humility is as remarkable as his faith.

10. "**They that were sent,**" &c. These took back with them the comforting message, "As thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee"; and doubtless as these words were spoken, it was done. He who commanded the winds and the sea, saying, "Peace, be still," commanded the palsy to depart, and the sickness to be no more. "He spake; and "it was done" (Ps. xxxiii. 9.).

11—17. The raising of the widow of Nain's son.

11. "**Nain.**" A small town of Galilee on a hill-side not far from Capernaum.

12 Now when He came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her. A. D. 28.

13 And when the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.

14 And He came and touched the [2] bier: and they that bare *him* stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, [a] Arise.

15 And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And He delivered him to his mother.

[2] Or, *coffin.*

[a] ch. 8. 54. John 11. 43. Acts 9. 40. Rom. 4. 17.

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12. "Carried out." The Jewish burial-places were generally outside the gates of their cities and villages. Christ had power over death in all its stages (See on St. Matt. ix. 25.).

"The only son of his mother, and she was a widow." A touching picture presented in a few simple words. Archbishop Trench well points out the bitterness of the mourning for an only son had passed into a proverb; thus, "Make thee mourning as for an only son, most "bitter lamentation" (Jer. vi. 26.): "They shall mourn for him, as one "mourneth for his only son" (Zech. xii. 10): "I will make it as the "mourning of an only son" (Amos viii. 10.). Doubtless this widow was well known, and her affliction excited great sympathy, for a large number of persons accompanied the funeral. Thus there were many witnesses to our Lord's great miracle.

13. "Weep not." Possibly when Christ spoke these words, they may have seemed to the poor mourner simply kindly words of compassion, yet it is probable that she was already a believer in Him, even if she had not such strength of faith as to believe in Him as "the "Resurrection and the Life" (St. John xi. 25.). But *He* spake the "Weep not," who had power to wipe away all tears, and surely that voice must have carried to the stricken mother's heart deep comfort, even before she knew how much was meant by the words.

14. "He came and touched the bier." As a sign to the bearers to stand still. The dead were not enclosed in coffins, as with us, but carried on a bier covered with a sheet or pall. Doubtless there was something in our Lord's manner which impressed the bearers so that they stood still when He laid His Hand on the bier.

"Young man," &c. Mark the authority with which our Lord commands the dead to arise. So to Jairus' daughter, "Maid, arise" (viii. 54.), and to Lazarus, "Lazarus, come forth" (St. John xi. 43.). It is very different with those who in the Old Testament were permitted to raise the dead, and who did so not without strong wrestlings for heavenly aid (See 1 Kings xvii. 20, 21. 2 Kings iv. 33, 34.).

15. "He delivered him to his mother." May we not in this see a dim foreshadowing of the great Resurrection in which the same Divine Lord will deliver to each other those of His redeemed whom death has parted here below, uniting them for ever in His heavenly kingdom? Of this young man we know nothing, except the simple fact recorded in this miracle; but can we doubt that one so wondrously restored to life would dedicate the life thus given back to him to Him who gave it?

A. D. 28.

16 [b] And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, [c] That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, [d] That God hath visited His people.

17 And this rumour of Him went forth throughout all Judæa, and throughout all the region round about.

18 ¶ And the disciples of John shewed him of all these things.

19 And John calling *unto him* two of his disciples sent *them* to Jesus, saying, Art Thou He that should come? or look we for another?

20 When the men were come unto Him, they said, John Baptist hath sent us unto Thee, saying, Art Thou He that should come? or look we for another?

21 And in that same hour He cured many of *their* infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many *that were* blind He gave sight.

22 Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; [e] how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, [f] to the poor the gospel is preached.

23 And blessed is *he*, whosoever shall not be offended in Me.

24 ¶ And when the messengers of John were departed, He began to speak unto the people concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness for to see? A reed shaken with the wind?

25 But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they which are gorgeously apparelled, and live delicately, are in kings' courts.

b ch. 1. 65.
c ch. 24. 19. John 4. 19. & 6. 14. & 9. 17.
d ch. 1. 68.
e Isai. 35. 5.
f ch. 4. 18.

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16. "That God hath visited His people." We are not to suppose that the people in saying this meant to speak of Christ as "God." Though their words would bear a most true and literal sense, yet they had no such insight into His real nature, and simply intended to express their belief that they had seen a wonderful display of God's power, which made them suppose that He, in whom it was displayed, was a "great "prophet," like Elijah or Elisha.

18—23. St. John the Baptist's Question.
St. Matt. xi. 2—6.

24—35. Discourse concerning St. John the Baptist.
St. Matt. xi. 7—19.

25. "They which are gorgeously apparelled, and live delicately." That is, 'They which are splendidly dressed, and fare daintily,' such

26 But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? A. D. 28.
Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet.

27 This is *he*, of whom it is written, **Behold, I send My messenger before Thy face, which shall prepare Thy way before Thee.** Mal. 3. 1.

28 For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.

29 And all the people that heard *Him*, and the publicans, justified God, [g] being baptized with the baptism of John.

[g] Matt. 3. 5. ch. 3. 12.

30 But the Pharisees and lawyers [2] rejected [h] the counsel of God [3] against themselves, being not baptized of him.

[2] Or, *frustrated.*
[h] Acts 20. 27.
[3] Or, *within themselves.*

31 And the Lord said, Whereunto then shall I

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as the rich man who was "clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared "sumptuously every day" (xvi. 19.).

29. "And all the people" &c. This and the next verse are not in St. Matthew, who gives some verses not recorded here. They appear to be a parenthesis (that is, something *put into* the main sentence, but not a part of it,) by St. Luke, the Evangelist breaking the thread of our Lord's discourse in order to state for his Gentile readers the effect of Christ's words, and the manner in which St. John the Baptist had been received by the Jews.

"All the people" &c. That is, All the common people who heard Him (Christ), and especially the publicans,—as opposed to the Pharisees and lawyers of the next verse.

"Justified God." That is, acknowledged God's justice and goodness, praising Him for the sending of the Fore-runner, with whose baptism they had been baptized.

30. "Rejected the counsel of God" &c. The word "against" in this verse should probably be 'towards.' These self-righteous men, as a body, refused God's gracious "counsel"—or purpose—towards them, which was, that they should be brought to repentance, for they had refused the baptism of the Fore-runner. That *some* of this class were baptized we may gather from St. Matt. iii. 7. The words "rejected the "counsel of God" are opposed to "justified God."

29, 30. "*And all the people*" *&c.* Many able commentators, and especially the ancient ones, take these verses to be part of our Lord's discourse, in which case of course the words, "That heard him," refer to St. John the Baptist, not to Christ. This view agrees best with the way in which our Lord continues His discourse in verse 31, for the opening words of that verse, "And the Lord said," are not found in the oldest copies, and ought probably to be omitted. Still on the whole it seems more natural to take the view given above that these verses are a parenthesis by the Evangelist.

30. "*Against themselves.*" These words may be taken either in the sense given above, 'towards themselves,' or, as some eminent commentators understand them, 'to their own condemnation.'

A.D. 28. liken the men of this generation? and to what are they like?

32 They are like unto children sitting in the marketplace, and calling one to another, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept.

i Matt. 3. 4. Mark 1. 6. ch. 1. 15. 33 For [i]John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil.

34 The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!

35 But wisdom is justified of all her children.

k Mark 14. 3. John 11. 2. 36 ¶ [k]And one of the Pharisees desired Him that He would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat.

37 And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a

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31. "**The men of this generation.**" Not all the Jews, but those who, like the Pharisees and lawyers, "rejected the counsel of God" towards them by rejecting both the stern Baptist and the gentle Christ.

36—50. The Anointing by the penitent woman.

Compare the anointing by Mary of Bethany, St. Matt. xxvi. 6—13. St. John xii. 1—7.

36. "**One of the Pharisees.**" Simon by name (40.). It is remarkable that this Pharisee's name was the same as that of the host in the case of the other anointing above referred to. But Simon was a very common Jewish name, and in almost all other particulars the two events are quite unlike one another. The whole of this part of St. Luke's Gospel being concerned with Galilee, it is probable that this event took place in some town or village in Galilee.

"**And He went**" &c. Thus fulfilling what He Himself said, "The "Son of Man is come eating and drinking" (34.), but at the same time showing by the use He made of the occasion how He carried with Him a blessing wherever He went, sanctifying daily life by His holy presence and His life-giving words.

37. "**A woman in the city, which was a sinner.**" Plainly she was publicly known as a sinner. We have here an instance of the truth of our Lord's words when He says that the "publicans and harlots" went into the kingdom of God before the self-righteous Pharisees. We have seen how He received one of the former of these two classes in the case of St. Matthew (v. 27—32.): we here see how He receives one of the latter. It has been a common idea that this woman was Mary Magdalene, but (although adopted in the modern heading to the chapter,) there is nothing at all to support such an idea. Still on the other hand we cannot pronounce it absolutely impossible that it is true (See on viii. 2.).

sinner, when she knew that *Jesus* sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, A. D. 28.

38 and stood at His feet behind *Him* weeping, and began to wash His feet with tears, and did wipe *them* with the hairs of her head, and kissed His feet, and anointed *them* with the ointment.

39 Now when the Pharisee which had bidden Him saw *it*, he spake within himself, saying, [1] This Man, if He were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman *this is* that toucheth Him: for she is a sinner. [1] ch. 15. 2.

40 And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on.

"An alabaster box." So it was in the other anointing by Mary of Bethany (St. Matt. xxvi. 7.).

38. "Stood at His feet" &c. This is explained by the Jewish mode of reclining on couches at meals (See on St. John xiii. 23.). This poor woman's penitence must have been very deep and real, for it could be no passing emotion which would dare so much to win the Saviour's pardon. She must have forced her way into the Pharisee's house, perhaps in spite of the servants' opposition; she must have braved the scorn with which she knew the master of the house would regard her; she must have nerved herself to face the publicity of such an act as hers, and the wonder of the guests:—but she doubtless forgot all when she beheld Him for whom she yearned, and had no thought except to win from Him some token of acceptance.

"With tears." The tears of a broken-hearted penitent, of which there is no mention—as there was no need—in the case of the loving faithful Mary of Bethany. The wiping with her hair does not appear to have been intended as an act of homage or devotion. Her hair was probably hanging loose, which was a Jewish token of mourning, and as she embraced our Lord's Feet, and her tears fell on them, she in tender care wiped them with her hair, which hung around them, as would naturally suggest itself at the moment.

39. This Man, if He were a prophet," &c. Simon thought now he had full proof of the falsity of our Lord's claim to be a prophet. It never entered his head that Christ could know better than he did what that woman's life had been, and yet not scorn and repel her. Nor had he any idea of the nature of the conversion which had now so utterly changed that woman's heart and character.

40. "Jesus answering said." Answering, that is, the Pharisee's unspoken thoughts. The tenderness and the wisdom of this answer to the Pharisee are very striking.

"Master, say on." Simon speaks with due respect, not at all revealing the thought, which he fancied was known only to himself.

A.D. 28.

41 There was a certain creditor which had two
[f] See Matt. 18. 28. debtors: the one owed five hundred [2] pence, and the other fifty.

42 And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?

43 Simon answered and said, I suppose that *he*, to whom he forgave most. And He said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.

44 And He turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine

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The Parable of the Two Debtors.

41. "A certain creditor." This, of course, is God; answering to the King in the parable of the Unmerciful Servant, which may be compared with this (See on St. Matt. xviii. 23—35.).

"Five hundred pence"—"fifty." We must observe here that these two sums are given to represent—not the actual amount of our debt to God, which is better represented by the ten thousand talents (St. Matt. xviii. 24.), but—the amount we are ourselves *conscious of*—that which we *feel* we owe. The right understanding of the whole parable depends upon our keeping this in view. Of course the poor penitent sinner is represented by the debtor who owed five hundred pence, and the Pharisee by the one who owed fifty. The one knew she had much to be forgiven: the other thought he had little.

42. "When they had nothing to pay." That is, when they found and felt they had nothing to offer in payment.

"He frankly forgave." That is, freely and fully forgave, as Jesus did, when he said, "Thy sins are forgiven" (48).

43. "He to whom he forgave most." Simon is answering in respect to human things,—to earthly debtors and money debts. *There* the amount of the favour shown in forgiving the debt is plain and clear, and according to the amount forgiven is the claim on our gratitude. But in spiritual matters it is different. In these we measure the favour shown us, and so the claim upon our love and gratitude,—not by the amount forgiven, for that we cannot see, but—by the amount we *fancy* has been forgiven. Thus, in other words, it is not he who is actually forgiven most who loves most, but he who has the deepest sense of sin, and so of the mercy shown him. Often one who has sinned less has the deeper sense of sin, and therefore the more lively gratitude for pardon.

44. "He turned to the woman." This seems to be the first notice our Lord had taken of her; and how must her broken and contrite heart have thrilled with hope as she heard Him recount one by one, and evidently with approval, her various acts of reverent affection. Having drawn from Simon the answer He desired, our Lord now goes on to apply it to the case before Him. He reasons thus with him:—'You 'say that he who is forgiven most loves most. Well, then he who loves 'most gives most proof that he has been forgiven. Now compare your 'love with this woman's, and judge for yourself which of you two gives 'most proof that you have found pardon and acceptance with God.'

house, thou gavest Me no water for My feet: but she hath washed My feet with tears, and wiped *them* with the hairs of her head. A. D. 28.

45 Thou gavest Me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss My feet.

46 [m] My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed My feet with ointment. [m] Ps. 23. 5.

47 [n] Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, *the same* loveth little. [n] 1 Tim. 1. 14.

48 And He said unto her, [o] Thy sins are forgiven. [o] Matt. 9. 2. Mark 2. 5.

"Thou gavest Me no water" &c. There is no reason to suppose that Simon had been disrespectful or uncourteous, but he had shown no marks of a desire to do special honour to his Guest.

45. "Thou gavest Me no kiss." Such a kiss of welcome was usual in the East. But we have no mention in the Gospels of any kiss given to Jesus, except those of this penitent on His Feet, and the kiss of Judas.

"Since the time I came in." It seems from this that the woman followed our Lord into the house when He first entered.

46. "Oil"—"ointment." The latter was very much more precious than the former.

47. "Her sins, which are many," &c. The only difficulty in this verse lies in the word "for." We must be careful not to suppose it to mean the same as 'because.' The woman was not forgiven because of her love. She loved because she was forgiven. The "for" gives the proof, not the cause, of the forgiveness. Our Lord's meaning is, 'Her 'sins which are many are forgiven, for you see how much she loved:— 'you may gather her forgiveness from the greatness of her love.'

"But to whom little" &c. This is plainly a warning to the Pharisee. Simon had shown little love. This proved that he had received little forgiveness. But why? Because he, in his blindness, thought he had little to be forgiven. Jesus speaks gently of *little* love and *little* pardon. Perhaps (as *Stier* says) "Simon's conscience might have answered, 'O "'Lord, Thou sayest not enough; Nothing is forgiven me, therefore I "'love Thee not at all.'"

"If a man *has* really sinned but little, compared with others who "have been grievous sinners, let him confess that it is a still greater "debt that he owes for sins *prevented* by God's love and mercy, than "if he had committed them and been forgiven" (*St. Augustine.*).

Mark how all through Jesus speaks with calm dignity of Himself as the One who could grant the forgiveness, and to whom the love was due.

48. "Thy sins are forgiven." With what deep joy must the penitent have heard these blissful words of absolution! There is no need to suppose that her sins were not pardoned till that moment. Indeed the whole of the discourse seems to take for granted that pardon goes before love, and so that this woman's sins were already pardoned when she showed such love. Thus this was rather a solemn declaration of the

A. D. 28.

49 And they that sat at meat with Him began to
p Matt. 9. 3. Mark 2. 7. say within themselves, p Who is This that forgiveth
sins also?

q Matt. 9. 22. Mark 5. 34. & 10. 52. ch. 8. 48. & 18. 42.

50 And He said to the woman, q Thy faith hath
saved thee; go in peace.

CHAPTER VIII.

3 Women minister unto Christ of their substance. 4 Christ, after He had preached from place to place, attended with His apostles, propoundeth the parable of the sower, 16 and of the candle: 21 declareth who are His mother, and brethren: 22 rebuketh the winds: 26 casteth the legion of devils out of the man into the herd of swine: 37 is rejected of the Gadarenes: 43 healeth the woman of her bloody issue, 49 and raiseth from death Jairus' daughter.

AND it came to pass afterward, that He went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve *were* with Him,

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pardon, than its actual bestowal. But, on the other hand, it has been well remarked by Alford that the Christian's love may be built up on "the expectation, the desire, and hope of forgiveness," as well as on the certainty of it (See on St. Matt. ix. 2, & 8.).

49. "Who is This" &c. This seems spoken in wonder and surprise, but not with the same malice as was shown on the occasion of a like blessing given to the paralytic man, when the scribes said within themselves, "This Man blasphemeth" (St. Matt. ix. 3.).

50. "Thy faith hath saved thee." Faith is the root, and love the fruit. Faith finds pardon, and pardon begets love. See how this poor sinner's faith worked by love. It saved her, because it brought her to the Saviour, and then she learnt to love.

"Go in peace." Surely that was a "peace that passeth all understanding" (Phil. iv. 7.).

CHAPTER VIII.

1—3. General account of Christ's ministry, and attendants.

1. "Preaching and shewing" &c. This answers exactly to the words, "preaching the gospel of the kingdom" (St. Matt. iv. 23.),—that is, the glad tidings of the setting up of the kingdom of heaven (See on St. Matt. iii. 2.). We thus see that '*preaching the gospel*' is not in Scriptural language limited to the preaching of the great central doctrine of the Atonement,—a sense often given to the expression in these days. In this place, for instance, it is not so much the preaching of redemption through the One great Sacrifice as the preaching of a kingdom to gather together in one all men in Christ;—in other words, not so much the preaching of the Cross as of the Church (See on xx. 1.).

"The twelve were with Him." Blessed companionship, training and fitting them for their own great work! We may be reminded here of the beautiful figure in which Moses describes the Lord's leading His people of old; "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over

2 and [a]certain women, which had been healed of A.D. 28.
evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, [a] Matt. 27. 55, 56.
[b]out of whom went seven devils, [b] Mark 16. 9.
3 and Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod's steward,

"her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on "her wings: so the Lord alone did lead him" (Deut. xxxii. 11, 12.). So too did the Lord Christ carry with Him His newly chosen Apostles till, strong in faith and grace, they were fitted to be sent forth alone to fly abroad bearing the blessed gospel to the world.

2. **"Certain women."** Here we find the first mention of that pious sisterhood, of which we hear so much more during the last great scenes of our Lord's earthly sojourn. Surely we have here a pledge of two things:—1. That Christianity was by its blessed influence to raise woman from the low and despised state to which Eastern custom had debased her, even as Christ Himself was "made of a woman" (Gal. iv. 4.), that He might undo the curse brought into the world by her who was "in the transgression" (1 Tim. ii. 14.): and 2. That our dear Redeemer will not reject the loving ministrations of holy women who devote themselves to labours of love for His sake.

"Which had been healed" &c. Thus they were bound to Jesus by bonds of more than common gratitude. They had temporal mercies, as well as spiritual, to call forth their love; and they would show forth their thankfulness, not with their lips only, but in their lives, by giving themselves up to Christ's service.

"Mary called Magdalene." From her birthplace (See on St. Mark xvi. 9.). She too had received the greatest temporal blessing, namely deliverance from the awful possession described in the next words. The nature of this terrible affliction (See on St. Matt. viii. 28.) makes it most unlikely that Mary Magdalene was the same person as the "woman "in the city, which was a sinner" of the last chapter (See on vii. 37.). Besides she is introduced here as if for the first time, and it is difficult to suppose St. Luke could have known Mary Magdalene to be the woman he had spoken so much of just before, and to have given no hint of the fact.

"Seven devils." So the Gadarene demoniac was possessed by "Legion" (30.); and notice also our Lord's description of the return of an evil spirit to a man, bringing with him "seven other spirits more "wicked than himself" (xi. 26. and see on St. Matt. xii. 43—45.), though this latter is perhaps more of the nature of a parable, than a description of an actual state of possession. Some have taken the seven devils which went out of Mary Magdalene as representing various forms of sin, such as lust, unbelief, and the like, but this has only been an unnatural forcing of the plain words of this verse in order to fit the idea that Mary Magdalene and the woman who anointed our Lord are the same. It is however to be remembered that very possibly former sin may have brought Mary Magdalene under the power of these evil spirits, so that we need not put aside the common belief that she was a great penitent because we do not think she was the same penitent who anointed our Lord's Feet in the house of Simon the Pharisee.

3. **"Joanna."** Being the wife of Herod's steward, Joanna would be in a position of some wealth and influence. She is mentioned again by St. Luke at the Resurrection (xxiv. 10.), but is not named in the

A. D. 28. and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto Him of their substance.

4 ¶ And when much people were gathered together, and were come to Him out of every city, He spake by a parable:

5 A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the way side; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it.

6 And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture.

7 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it.

8 And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundredfold. And when He had said these things, He cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

9 ¶ And His disciples asked Him, saying, What might this parable be?

10 And He said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others
c Isai. 6. 9. in parables; c that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.

11 ¶ Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.

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other Gospels (But see on St. John iv. 46.). This Herod is the same who is mentioned as "Tetrarch of Galilee" (iii. 1.). Susanna is not mentioned any where else.

"Ministered" &c. These good women served, or attended upon, our Lord (See on St. Matt. xx. 26. and *Note*.), providing food, or other necessaries, "of their substance,"—that is, by their worldly wealth.

4—8. The Sower.

St. Matt. xiii. 1—9. St. Mark iv. 1—9.

6. "A rock." Observe the value of varied accounts of the same thing. Here the "rock" explains the "stony places" of St. Matthew's version (See *Notes* on St. Matt. viii. 25. and ch. vi. 17.).

9, 10. Why Jesus used Parables.

St. Matt. xiii. 10—17. St. Mark iv. 10—13.

11—15. Explanation of the Sower.

St. Matt. xiii. 18—23. St. Mark iv. 14—20.

12 Those by the way side are they that hear; A.D. 28.
then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word
out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be
saved.

13 They on the rock *are they*, which, when they
hear, receive the word with joy; and these have
no root, which for a while believe, and in time of
temptation fall away.

14 And that which fell among thorns are they,
which, when they have heard, go forth, and are
choked with cares and riches and pleasures of *this*
life, and bring no fruit to perfection.

15 But that on the good ground are they, which
in an honest and good heart, having heard the
word, keep *it*, and bring forth fruit with patience.

16 ¶ [d] No man, when he hath lighted a candle, [d] Matt. 5. 15. ch. 11. 33.
covereth it with a vessel, or putteth *it* under a bed;
but setteth *it* on a candlestick, that they which
enter in may see the light.

17 [e] For nothing is secret, that shall not be made [e] Matt. 10. 26. ch. 12. 2.

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13. "In time of temptation." Archbishop Trench suggests a beautiful thought here, namely that, as the hot sun, which scorches and destroys the shallow-rooted plant, only helps to ripen and perfect the strong and deep-rooted, so temptations—"tribulation or persecution" (St. Matt.)—which cause the shallow unstable man to fall, only strengthen the faith and perfect the character of the true Christian.

14. "Bring no fruit to perfection." How many a fair promise is brought to nought by the rampant weeds of the "cares and riches "and pleasures of this life"!

15. "With patience." This is the "patient continuance in well-"doing" (Rom. ii. 7.). The fruit of holy living must be a perpetual—a never-failing—fruit. It is not enough to produce one crop, and then to fall back, and become unfruitful. This appears to be the chief meaning of this expression, though we need not shut out the meaning which makes the "patience" to refer to the time *before* the fruit ripens, the gradual patient unfolding of Christian graces—"first the blade, "then the ear; after that the full corn in the ear" (St. Mark iv. 28.).

16—18. How to hear Christ's words.

St. Mark iv. 21—25.

16. "They which enter in." If we carry out the figure, or parable (as it may be fitly called), those who enter in would be the heathen, who, brought within the pale of the Church, are enlightened with the light of the truth which she holds on high, and which already "giveth "light unto all that are in the house" (St. Matt. v. 15.).

A.D. 28. manifest; neither *any thing* hid, that shall not be known and come abroad.

f Matt. 13. 12. & 25. 29. ch. 19. 26. 18 Take heed therefore how ye hear: f for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he 2 seemeth to have.

2 Or, *thinketh that he hath.*

19 ¶ Then came to Him *His* mother and His brethren, and could not come at Him for the press.

20 And it was told Him *by certain* which said, Thy mother and Thy brethren stand without, desiring to see Thee.

21 And He answered and said unto them, My mother and My brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it.

22 ¶ Now it came to pass on a certain day, that He went into a ship with His disciples: and He said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth.

23 But as they sailed He fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind on the lake; and they were filled *with water*, and were in jeopardy.

24 And they came to Him, and awoke Him, saying, Master, Master, we perish. Then He arose, and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water: and they ceased, and there was a calm.

25 And He said unto them, Where is your faith?

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18. "That which he seemeth to have." The truth, or knowledge, or privilege, which he seemed to possess, but which was not his own, for, when he failed to use it, it was taken away. This is ever the law of God's gifts. If they are not used, they are taken away.

19—21. Christ's Mother and Brethren.

St. Matt. xii. 46—50. St. Mark iii. 31—35.

22—25. The Stilling of the Tempest.

St. Matt. viii. 23—27. St. Mark iv. 35—41.

23. "They were filled with water." Literally 'were *being filled* 'with water.' The water was washing into the boat, which was becoming fuller and fuller, till the "jeopardy"—that is, danger—seemed to the disciples, accustomed as they were to such scenes, very great.

19—21. It seems probable from a comparison with the other Gospels that this occurrence really took place in close connection with another bearing some resemblance to it, and related in xi. 27, 28, where see *Note*.

And they being afraid wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! for He commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey Him. A.D. 28.

26 ¶ And they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee.

27 And when He went forth to land, there met Him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in *any* house, but in the tombs.

28 When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before Him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with Thee, Jesus, *Thou* Son of God most high? I beseech Thee, torment me not.

29 (For He had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For oftentimes it had caught him: and he was kept bound with chains and in fetters; and he brake the bands, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness.)

30 And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? And he said, Legion: because many devils were entered into him.

31 And they besought Him that He would not command them to go out [g] into the deep.

[g] Rev. 20. 3.

26—39. The Healing of the Gadarene Demoniac.

St. Matt. viii. 28—34. St. Mark v. 1—20.

26. "Over against Galilee." That is, opposite Galilee, or on the Eastern side of the Lake, in the country known as Peræa. Galilee lay entirely to the West of the Jordan and Sea of Galilee (See *Map.*).

27. "Out of the city." That is, belonging to the city of Gadara. It is plain from the rest of this verse that the demoniac was not *then* coming out of the city.

28. "He cried out." This is spoken of the man, yet the words were the words of the evil spirits; so completely did these terrible beings make the human frame in which they lodged their own.

"What have I to do with Thee," &c. The very presence of Jesus is pain and terror to the evil spirits. So will it be in the last great day to all those who have taken their part with the Prince of evil, and rejected Christ here. They will say "to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the "throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb" (Rev. vi. 16.).

29. "Oftentimes it had caught him." He was thus subject to frequent fits of more than usual violence, during which he showed a marvellous strength. This is sometimes seen in cases of insanity.

31. "Into the deep." The word translated "the deep" means

A. D. 28. 32 And there was there an herd of many swine feeding on the mountain: and they besought Him that He would suffer them to enter into them. And He suffered them.

33 Then went the devils out of the man, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choked.

34 When they that fed *them* saw what was done, they fled, and went and told *it* in the city and in the country.

35 Then they went out to see what was done; and came to Jesus, and found the man, out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid.

36 They also which saw *it* told them by what means he that was possessed of the devils was healed.

37 Then the whole multitude of the country of
[h] Acts 16. 39. the Gadarenes round about [h] besought Him to depart from them; for they were taken with great fear: and He went up into the ship, and returned back again.

38 Now the man out of whom the devils were departed besought Him that he might be with Him: but Jesus sent him away, saying,

39 Return to thine own house, and shew how great things God hath done unto thee. And he went his

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literally the 'abyss.' It is the same word which in the Revelation is translated "bottomless pit" (Rev. ix. 11. xx. 3.). We must guard against supposing that it means the Sea (as in Ps. cvii. 24.).

37. **"Besought Him to depart."** The people of Sychar besought Him to tarry with them (St. John iv. 40.). And He granted both requests. Thus does He teach us a great law which governs His dealings with us, namely that His blessings are for those alone who desire them. It is those who hunger and thirst who shall be filled. Christ speaks now as Moses spoke of old: "I have set before you life and "death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life" (Deut. xxx. 19.). The Samaritans of Sychar chose life: the Gadarenes refused it. And both were dealt with according to their choice.

"They were taken with great fear." They saw Christ's power, but shut their eyes to His love. Thus they were afraid of His miracles; and dreaded lest He should inflict upon them other losses, like that of the swine. How good an example does their blind fear give of our Lord's saying, "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it" (St. Matt. xvi. 25.).

way, and published throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done unto him. A.D. 23.

40 ¶ And it came to pass, that, when Jesus was returned, the people *gladly* received Him: for they were all waiting for Him.

41 And, behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue: and he fell down at Jesus' feet, and besought Him that He would come into his house:

42 for he had one only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she lay a dying. But as He went the people thronged Him.

43 And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any,

44 came behind *Him*, and touched the border of His garment: and immediately her issue of blood stanched.

45 And Jesus said, Who touched Me? When all denied, Peter and they that were with Him said, Master, the multitude throng Thee and press *Thee*, and sayest Thou, Who touched Me?

40—56. The Miracles of the Raising of Jairus' daughter, and of the Healing of the woman with an issue of blood.

St. Matt. ix. 18—26. St. Mark v. 21—43.

42. "One only daughter." So the widow of Nain had one only son (vii. 12.). Christ feels for human love, and human sorrow.

44. "The border of His garment." Or "hem" (as the same word is translated in St. Matthew.). This was the "fringe" with a blue riband or edging, which was commanded as a distinctive mark of the Jews (Numb. xv. 38.), and was therefore held sacred. It seems more natural to suppose that this woman spoke of, and touched, the "hem" as the extreme or farthest portion of our Lord's raiment than on account of its special sacredness. It is the *least* touch—the touch of the very *smallest* part—which is meant.

45. "When all denied." That is, all at that moment close to Him. **"Master, the multitude throng Thee" &c.** It has been a favourite lesson from this miracle to point out the vast difference between the mere outward touch, which no doubt many of those thronging Jesus must have unintentionally given Him, and the touch of faith, which was given by this poor woman alone. It is easy to be very near Christ outwardly, in His house, in His word, in His sacraments, and yet to win no blessing from this nearness; while some poor unknown unnoticed penitent, who has for many years been a captive to sin, may with one

A. D. 28. 46 And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched Me:
[i] ch. 6. 19. for I perceive that [i] virtue is gone out of Me.

47 And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before Him, she declared unto Him before all the people for what cause she had touched Him, and how she was healed immediately.

48 And He said unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace.

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simple heart-felt cry of faith touch, as it were, the hem of His garment, and be free.

46. "Somebody hath touched Me:" &c. There is nothing in these words to prevent our believing that Christ knew who had touched Him. His object is plainly to draw forth the poor woman from her concealment, and to lead her to tell her own story. If He had Himself told it, some would have doubted. Still our Lord does not seem to have exercised omniscience (that is, knowledge of all things) while on earth, except when He specially willed to do so. It was one of those Divine attributes, which He of His own will laid aside, so far as His Human Nature was concerned, when He became Man (See on St. Matt. xxiv. 36.). In ordinary matters He submitted to be Man in knowledge, as in other things. We cannot imagine every question He asked to have been asked with a perfect knowledge of the answer; as, for instance, "How many loaves have ye?" (St. Matt. xv. 34.), "Where have ye laid "him?" (St. John xi. 34.). Thus it is not thinking unworthily of Christ to imagine, as some do, that in the present case He really did not know who had touched Him, but only that He had been touched by faith, and had freely bestowed the blessing thus sought for. Yet in saying this, it is needful always to remember that such a human condition of knowledge was but a part of that perfect human nature which the ever-blessed Son of God of His own free will accepted, in order that "in all things" He might be "made like unto His brethren" (Heb. ii. 17.); and that at the same time that He was thus very Man, He was also very God (See on St. John v. 18.).

"I perceive." This simply means 'I know'; and is not spoken of a bodily feeling or sense, but of a knowledge of the mind.

47. "She was not hid." This (especially compared with St. Mark v. 32.) would lead us to think that our Lord exercised His Divine power in this case, and, knowing who it was that had touched Him, fixed His Eye on her, and showed her that she was not hid from Him.

"Before all the people." This must have been a great trial to her, for doubtless it was shame and modesty which made her approach at first so secretly. But others are to be blessed through her, and for herself there is yet another and a greater blessing, and so Jesus will have her tell all. And how many thousands have drawn comfort and instruction from this tale since! We would thank our merciful Lord that He did not suffer this poor woman to depart in the secresy with which she came. Doubtless many others like her sought and found healing, though not like her brought forward to tell of the mercy they had received (See St. Mark vi. 56.).

49 While He yet spake, there cometh one from the ruler of the synagogue's *house*, saying to him, Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master. A.D. 28.

50 But when Jesus heard *it*, He answered him, saying, Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole.

51 And when He came into the house, He suffered no man to go in, save Peter, and James, and John, and the father and the mother of the maiden.

52 And all wept, and bewailed her: but He said, Weep not; she is not dead, [k] but sleepeth. [k] John 11. 11, 13.

53 And they laughed Him to scorn, knowing that she was dead.

54 And He put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, [l] arise. [l] ch. 7. 14. John 11. 43.

55 And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway: and He commanded to give her meat.

56 And her parents were astonished: but [m] He charged them that they should tell no man what was done. [m] Matt. 8. 4. & 9. 30.

CHAPTER IX.

1 *Christ sendeth His apostles to work miracles, and to preach.* 7 *Herod desired to see Christ.* 17 *Christ feedeth five thousand:* 18 *enquireth what opinion the world had of Him: foretelleth His passion:* 23 *proposeth to all the pattern of His patience.* 28 *The Transfiguration.* 37 *He healeth the lunatick:* 43 *again forewarneth His disciples of His passion:* 46 *commendeth humility:* 51 *biddeth them to shew mildness towards all, without desire of revenge.* 57 *Divers would follow Him, but upon conditions.*

THEN [a] He called His twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases. A.D. 29. 33rd Year of our Lord's life. [a] Mark 3. 13.

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50. "He answered him." Certainly our Lord's words were spoken to Jairus, not to the messenger. So this answer must be to the unspoken fears of the former, or to the actual words of the latter, though spoken to the former.

53. "Knowing that she was dead." The reason for this scornful laughter,—but not given in the other Gospels.

54. "Put them all out." That is, all but the three Apostles and the father and the mother.

55. "Her spirit came again." This is the most express declaration of a return to life. Her spirit had left the body. It was no trance or fit. It was actual death. The spirit "came again"—that is, from the abode of spirits—from Hades (See on xvi. 23.).

CHAPTER IX.

1—6. The sending forth of the Twelve Apostles.

St. Matt. x. 1—15. St. Mark vi. 7—13.

A. D. 29. 2 And [b] He sent them to preach the kingdom of
[b] ch. 10. 1, 9. God, and to heal the sick.

[c] ch. 10. 4. & 22. 35. 3 [c] And He said unto them, Take nothing for *your* journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats apiece.

4 And whatsoever house ye enter into, there abide, and thence depart.

5 And whosoever will not receive you, when ye go
[d] Acts 13. 51. out of that city, [d] shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them.

6 And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing every where.

7 ¶ Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was done by Him: and he was perplexed, because that it was said of some, that John was risen from the dead;

8 and of some, that Elias had appeared; and of others, that one of the old prophets was risen again.

9 And Herod said, John have I beheaded: but
[e] ch. 23. 8. who is this, of whom I hear such things? [e] And he desired to see Him.

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2. "To preach the kingdom of God." As their Master had done before them (See on viii. 1.).

4. "There abide, and thence depart." That is, Remain there all the time you are in that city—"Go not from house to house" (x. 7.).

7—9. Herod's perplexity concerning Christ.

St. Matt. xiv. 1—12. St. Mark vi. 14—29.

7. "It was said of some," &c. And this, which some said, Herod himself half believed, his guilty conscience filling him with superstitious fears.

8. "That Elias had appeared." It is not said 'had risen', for Elijah, or, as he is here called, Elias, had never died. He was taken up in a chariot of fire.

9. "John have I beheaded: but who is this," &c. Herod, frightened by his own guilty fears, half believed that it was John the Baptist returned to life to take vengeance upon him, and yet tried to reason himself out of it. No doubt he asked, "Who is this?" with the secret dread lest those who said it was John the Baptist were right. In the other Gospels he himself expresses his fears more openly.

"He desired to see Him." In the hope that his fears might be relieved, and also that he might see Him work some miracle. His desire to see Jesus is never gratified till He is sent to him as a Prisoner by Pontius Pilate, when for the last time he makes his choice, setting Jesus at nought and mocking Him (xxiii. 7—10.). Herod Antipas

10 ¶ And the apostles, when they were returned, A. D. 29.
told Him all that they had done. And He took them, and went aside privately into a desert place belonging to the city called Bethsaida.

11 And the people, when they knew *it*, followed Him: and He received them, and spake unto them of the kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing.

12 And when the day began to wear away, then came the twelve, and said unto Him, Send the multitude away, that they may go into the towns and country round about, and lodge, and get victuals: for we are here in a desert place.

13 But He said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they said, We have no more but five loaves and two fishes; except we should go and buy meat for all this people.

14 For they were about five thousand men. And He said to His disciples, Make them sit down by fifties in a company.

15 And they did so, and made them all sit down.

16 Then He took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, He blessed them, and brake, and gave to the disciples to set before the multitude.

17 And they did eat, and were all filled: and there was taken up of fragments that remained to them twelve baskets.

18 ¶ And it came to pass, as He was alone pray-

(See on iii. 1.) is a picture of one who, with many warnings and opportunities, much knowledge, and some attempts to do right, is led captive by one wicked passion which brings him to destruction.

10—17. The Feeding of the Five Thousand.

St. Matt. xiv. 13—21. St. Mark vi. 30—44. St. John vi. 1—13.

10. "Went aside." By ship, as all the other Gospels say.

"Bethsaida." Not the place of that name which is best known to us as the birthplace of the chief Apostles, and which lay on the Western side of the Sea of Galilee near Capernaum; but another village of the same name which lay on the North East of the lake not far from the spot where the Jordan flows into it (See *Note* on St. Matt. xi. 21.).

11. "He received them." Ready to help them, and giving up at once His wish for rest and solitude. Blessed Example of self-sacrifice for others!

A.D. 29. ing, His disciples were with Him: and He asked them, saying, Whom say the people that I am?

f ver. 7, 8. Matt. 14. 2. 19 They answering said, f John the Baptist; but some *say*, Elias; and others *say*, that one of the old prophets is risen again.

20 He said unto them, But whom say ye that I am? Peter answering said, The Christ of God.

g John 6. 69. 21 g And He straitly charged them, and commanded *them* to tell no man that thing;

h Matt. 17. 22. 22 saying, h The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day.

i Matt. 10. 38. ch. 14. 27. 23 i And He said to *them* all, If any *man* will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.

24 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for My sake, the same shall save it.

25 For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?

k Matt. 10. 33. 2 Tim. 2. 12. 26 k For whosoever shall be ashamed of Me and of My words, of him shall the Son of man be

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18—27. Confession of St. Peter. Jesus foretells His Passion, and speaks of bearing the Cross.

St. Matt. xvi. 13—28. St. Mark viii. 27—ix. 1.

18. "His disciples were with Him." That is, they came to Him. This was in the neighbourhood of Cæsarea Philippi, as we learn from the other Gospels.

19. "One of the old prophets." As Jeremiah, who is specially mentioned in St. Matthew.

20. "But whom say ye" &c. The force in this question must be put upon the "ye", as opposed to "the people" (18.).

"The Christ of God." This, like St. Mark's, is a brief summary of what is much more fully related by St. Matthew. We find there that St. Peter's words were, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living "God."

23. "Daily." This word, full of instruction as it is, is only given by St. Luke. It teaches us that the bearing of the Cross is not alone the patient enduring of suffering, when sent to us, but also a continual *daily* self-sacrifice for our Lord's sake. It is well that we should ask ourselves, 'What do I give up for my Lord's sake? Is there any *daily* 'taking up of the Cross? Nay, is there any taking of it up at all?'

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24. *Whosoever will save" &c.* See also on St. Matt. x. 39.

ashamed, when He shall come in His own glory, A. D. 29.
and *in His* Father's, and of the holy angels.
27 But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God.

28 ¶ And it came to pass about an eight days after these [2] sayings, He took Peter and John and [2] Or, *things.*
James, and went up into a mountain to pray.
29 And as He prayed, the fashion of His countenance was altered, and His raiment *was* white *and* glistering.
30 And, behold, there talked with Him two men, which were Moses and Elias:
31 who appeared in glory, and spake of His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem.
32 But Peter and they that were with Him [1] were [1] Dan. 8. 18. & 10. 9.

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26. "In His own glory," &c. The glory in which Christ shall come to judge the world will be 1. His own, which He had before the worlds as the eternal Son: 2. the special glory with which the Father clothes Him as Judge, committing all judgment to Him, and setting Him upon the great white throne (Rev. xx. 11.): 3. the glory of the heavenly host who accompany Him.

28—36. The Transfiguration.

St. Matt. xvii. 1—9. St. Mark ix. 2—10.

28. "To pray." This is mentioned only by St. Luke, but we should almost have concluded it for ourselves, had it not been named; for it seems most natural that it should be while He was engaged in blessed intercourse with His heavenly Father that His Transfiguration should take place. Prayer opened the gates of heaven, and through those gates there streamed down on Jesus the "excellent glory" (2 St. Peter i. 17.).

31. "Who appeared in glory." That is, very glorious, partaking of the glory with which the Lord was surrounded.

"And spake of His decease." The word translated "decease" here is 'exodus', that is, 'departure'. There is probably a reference to the Exodus of Moses from Egypt, that being a type of Christ's deliverance of His people, by a new Passover, from their bondage; their Captain and Mediator leading the way from this Egypt to the heavenly Canaan. To him who reads them aright the Law and the Prophets ever speak of Christ's decease. Yet surely in the unseen world these Saints had learnt more concerning this great mystery than they knew on earth. We know not even whether, when Moses lifted up the brazen serpent in the wilderness, he had any glimpse given him of its great typical meaning. Yet now he speaks of Christ's decease, and the words would imply that it is a theme of holy joy and thrilling interest. Doubtless the "spirits of just men made perfect" learn within the veil ever new lessons of the love and the glory of Jesus.

A.D. 29. heavy with sleep: and when they were awake, they saw His glory, and the two men that stood with Him.

33 And it came to pass, as they departed from Him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing what he said.

34 While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud.

35 And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying,
[m] This is My beloved Son: [n] hear Him.

[m] Matt. 3. 17.
[n] Acts 3. 22.

36 And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone. And they kept *it* close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen.

37 ¶ And it came to pass, that on the next day, when they were come down from the hill, much people met Him.

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32. "Heavy with sleep:" &c. The Transfiguration having probably taken place at night (See 37.) may account for this heaviness, which reminds us of that which overcame the same favoured three in Gethsemane. It appears that on this occasion, although they did not actually fall asleep, they became drowsy while Jesus prayed, but were aroused to perfect wakefulness by the brightness of the vision itself. The word translated "when they were awake" would be more exactly translated 'having kept themselves awake throughout,'—that is, throughout the vision, the Evangelist thus guarding against its being supposed to be a mere dream.

33. "It is good for us to be here." Yes; for a little space, but not always. We must not spend our lives "gazing up into heaven": we have work to do for Christ before He comes again. Yet the brightness of moments of heavenly contemplation should shine upon our daily toil, and gild our darkest hours. Another beautiful thought upon this passage is given us by an ancient writer. "If the contemplation of "Christ's glorified Manhood so filled the Apostle with joy that he was "unwilling to be parted from it, how shall it fare with them who attain "to the contemplation of His glorious Godhead? And if it was so good "a thing to dwell with two of His saints, how good then to come to the "heavenly Jerusalem, to the general assembly and Church of the first-"born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and "to these, not seen through a glass and darkly, but face to face?" (*St. Anselm, quoted by Abp. Trench.*).

34. "As they entered."—That is, Moses and Elijah, not the Apostles.

37—42. Healing of the lunatic child.

St. Matt. xvii. 14—21. St. Mark ix. 14—29.

37. "On the next day." This makes it very probable that the Transfiguration occurred at night.

38 And, behold, a man of the company cried out, A.D. 29.
saying, Master, I beseech Thee, look upon my son:
for he is mine only child.

39 And, lo, a spirit taketh him, and he suddenly
crieth out; and it teareth him that he foameth
again, and bruising him hardly departeth from
him.

40 And I besought Thy disciples to cast him out;
and they could not.

41 And Jesus answering said, O faithless and
perverse generation, how long shall I be with you,
and suffer you? Bring thy son hither.

42 And as he was yet a coming, the devil threw
him down, and tare *him*. And Jesus rebuked the
unclean spirit, and healed the child, and delivered
him again to his father.

43 ¶ And they were all amazed at the mighty
power of God. But while they wondered every one
at all things which Jesus did, He said unto His
disciples,

44 Let these sayings sink down into your ears:
for the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands
of men.

45 °But they understood not this saying, and it ° ch. 2. 50. & 18. 34.

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38. "**Mine only child.**" So was Jairus' daughter, and the widow of Nain's son (See on viii. 42.).

39. "**Hardly.**" That is, 'with difficulty.'

43—45. Our Lord again foretells His Death and Resurrection.

St. Matt. xvii. 22, 23. St. Mark ix. 30—32.

44. "**Let these sayings**" &c. By "these sayings" our Lord probably meant His predictions of His own sufferings, referred to in the next words, and which He had already spoken of (22.). It was needful to impress these strongly upon His disciples, since His acts of power, and the amazement of the people, would naturally encourage ambitious thoughts of earthly greatness.

45. "**They understood not.**" It was long before they really understood that Christ's kingdom was not of this world. It was only by slow degrees that they themselves attained to the truths they were to teach the world (See on St. Mark vi. 52.). In the dimness of their insight at this time into the nature of Christ and His work, it must have been very perplexing to hear One who could do such wonderful works speak of His approaching sufferings and death.

A.D. 29. was hid from them, that they perceived it not: and they feared to ask Him of that saying.

46 ¶ Then there arose a reasoning among them, which of them should be greatest.

47 And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child, and set him by Him,

p Matt. 10. 40. John 12. 44. & 13. 20.

48 and said unto them, [p] Whosoever shall receive this child in My name receiveth Me: and whosoever shall receive Me receiveth Him that sent Me: [q] for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great.

q Matt. 23. 11, 12.

r See Num. 11, 28.

49 [r] And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in Thy name; and we forbad him, because he followeth not with us.

50 And Jesus said unto him, Forbid *him* not: for

s See Matt. 12. 30. ch. 11. 23.

[s] he that is not against us is for us.

51 ¶ And it came to pass, when the time was come

46—50. Lesson in humility from a little child.

St. Matt. xviii. 1—14. St. Mark ix. 33—50.

47. "**Perceiving the thought of their heart.**" That is, probably, the wish to know from Himself who should be greatest.

48. "**Him that sent Me.**" That is, God Himself. The blessing cannot go higher. He who in love receives even a little child receives (in that blessed fellowship by which God's children are said to be in Him, and He in them,) that God, who "is Love."

51—56. The Sons of Zebedee wishing to call down fire upon a Samaritan village.

51. "**When the time was come**" &c. This is a very important mark of time, signifying the near approach of the last great events of our Lord's sojourn on earth, which ended in His being "received up" to heaven in the Ascension. Up to this point the whole of our Lord's public ministry related by St. Luke is placed in Galilee. We now turn our eyes Southward towards Judæa and Jerusalem. It should be carefully remembered that the same great break in the history is to be observed in all the three earlier Gospels, the first portion of each being concerned with our Lord's Galilæan ministry, and the last with the events closely connected with the Crucifixion. (In St. Matthew this break occurs at xix. 1, and in St. Mark at x. 1.) Our Lord's progress to Jerusalem was not direct, but included a long missionary tour to many towns and villages, in Galilee itself, and then in Samaria and Judæa. This tour is briefly described in several places, as, for instance, "He "went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward "Jerusalem" (xiii. 22. Compare xvii. 11. xviii. 31.). It is probable that this tour ended in our Lord's arriving at Jerusalem in time for the

that [t] He should be received up, He stedfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem, A.D. 29.

[t] Mark 16. 19. Acts 1. 2.

52 and sent messengers before His face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for Him.

53 And [u] they did not receive Him, because His face was as though He would go to Jerusalem.

[u] John 4. 4, 9.

54 And when His disciples James and John saw *this*, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as [x] Elias did?

[x] 2 Kings 1. 10, 12.

55 But He turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.

56 For [y] the Son of man is not come to destroy

[y] John 3. 17. & 12. 47.

Feast of Dedication in the December before His Crucifixion (See on St. John x. 22.).

"He stedfastly set His face." That is, knowing perfectly, and foretelling frequently, what should there befall Him, He nevertheless approached with calm and stedfast purpose the scene of His coming Passion.

52, "Sent messengers." At first perhaps He sent such as presented themselves among His disciples, but after a little while He formed the band of seventy for this purpose (x. 1.).

"To make ready." Perhaps not alone to prepare food and lodging, but to announce publicly His coming as the Messiah.

53. "Because His face" &c. That is, He was evidently travelling Southwards, only passing through Samaria on His way to Jerusalem. He was now announcing Himself as the Messiah more publicly than ever before, and it would be a very great offence to the Samaritans that He should acknowledge Jerusalem as the holy city, and so condemn them in their separation from the Jews (See on St. Matt. x. 5.).

54. "James and John." Surnamed the 'Sons of thunder', possibly from the vehemence of character, of which we have here an example (See on St. Mark iii. 17.).

"Even as Elias did." Elijah called down fire from heaven upon two companies of soldiers sent to take him by Ahaziah king of Israel, whose death he had prophesied (2 Kings i. 10, 12.).

55. "Ye know not what manner" &c. That is, either, 'Ye do not 'know yourselves, nor what sort of spirit your wish shows that you 'entertain;' or else, 'Ye do not know the true nature of the spirit of that 'new and heavenly kingdom to which ye belong,—ye do not understand 'that the spirit of the new covenant of grace is one of love and forbear-'ance and the returning of good for evil.' We may well notice that one of these two brothers, who would now have called down fire from heaven to destroy these Samaritans, afterwards went with his fellow-apostle St. Peter to call down upon the people of Samaria the fire of the Holy Ghost to save them (See Acts viii. 14—17.).

56. "Not come to destroy" &c. How gently and patiently then should His sinful servants deal with the erring and ignorant!

A.D. 29. men's lives, but to save *them*. And they went to another village.

57 ¶ And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain *man* said unto Him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.

58 And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air *have* nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay *His* head.

59 And He said unto another, Follow Me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.

60 Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.

[z] See 1 Kin. 19. 20.

61 And another also said, Lord, [z] I will follow Thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house.

62 And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

"Another village." Which, doubtless, was willing to receive Him, and thereby won a priceless blessing. Again we may notice the rule by which Christ bestows His mercies. They are never forced upon the unwilling (See on viii. 37.).

57—62. Warnings to certain who would follow Christ.

St. Matt. viii. 18—22.

62. "No man, having put his hand" &c. It was an innocent—nay, in itself, a right thing—which this man wished to do. Under ordinary circumstances our Lord would certainly have approved of such a token of affection for his own family as he desired to show. But doubtless our Lord saw in the man's heart, and probably in his manner too, a backwardness, and shrinking from the work, which drew out the warning here given. Those who would follow Christ must give themselves up wholly to Him. There must be no backward looks (like those of Lot's wife); only a stedfast unflinching eye to the work of the great Master. By "fit for the "kingdom of God" our Lord means 'serviceable, or useful, in doing the 'work of that kingdom.'

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57. "*It came to pass,*" &c. The following events are placed by St. Matthew at a much earlier part of our Lord's ministry. It is only necessary to repeat that the Evangelists do not make a point of arranging all the events of our Lord's life in the precise order of their occurrence, and that therefore differences in the order between the different Gospels need not perplex us. We are however often able in such cases of difference to see when one of the Evangelists has preserved the true place of the event related. For instance, here the events are probably given in their true place by St. Matthew, because he connects them in verse 18 with the rest of the narrative, whereas St. Luke introduces them without anything to show when they took place. And we may notice that the nature of the events themselves would, if we had nothing else to guide us, lead to the idea that they took place in the early, rather than in the later, part of our Lord's public ministry.

CHAPTER X. A.D. 29.

1 Christ sendeth out at once seventy disciples to work miracles, and to preach: 17 admonisheth them to be humble, and wherein to rejoice: 21 thanketh His Father for His grace: 23 magnifieth the happy estate of His church: 25 teacheth the lawyer how to attain eternal life, and to take every one for his neighbour that needeth his mercy: 41 reprehendeth Martha, and commendeth Mary her sister.

AFTER these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and [a] sent them two and two [a] Mark 6. 7. before His face into every city and place, whither He Himself would come.

2 Therefore said He unto them, [b] The harvest truly *is* great, but the labourers *are* few: [c] pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He would send forth labourers into His harvest. [b] Matt. 9. 37, 38. John 4. 35. [c] 2 Thess. 3. 1.

CHAPTER X.

1—16. Sending forth of the Seventy.

Compare the sending forth of the Twelve Apostles, St. Matt. x.

1. "Other seventy." That is, besides the Twelve Apostles, whom He had chosen some time before (vi. 13.). From the earliest times it was held that, as the Twelve Apostles were succeeded by the order of Bishops as the highest order in the Church, so the Seventy were succeeded by the order of Priests. The former answer to the twelve Patriarchs, the founders of the people of Israel, the latter to the seventy Elders, chosen by Moses, upon whom God poured out His Spirit (Num. xi. 25.). Ancient writers frequently refer to the twelve wells of water and seventy palm-trees at Elim (Ex. xv. 27.) as a type of the twelve Apostles and seventy Disciples, who bestow the waters of life, and provide a blessed shelter for the weary, in the barren wilderness of this world. St. Luke alone relates the appointment of the Seventy, as he alone relates also the appointment of the seven Deacons (Acts vi. 1—6.).

"Sent them two and two." Our Lord had already sent messengers in like manner before Him to prepare for His approach (ix. 52.). He now more formally appoints these to the work. We are not however to suppose that this appointment was only for the temporary purpose here named of going before our Lord on His tour from place to place as He gradually approached Jerusalem. The Seventy were doubtless set apart to be Christ's heralds for the rest of their lives, and when they had no longer to prepare men for His coming in the cities and villages of the Holy Land, they would still go forth to prepare men for His great coming at the last day.

2. "The harvest" &c. This saying our Lord also used just before the sending forth of the Twelve (St. Matt. ix. 37, 38.). It is well remarked that "the sending out of the Seventy was of itself an answer "to the prayer, which, on the occasion of sending forth the Twelve, "Jesus urged His disciples to offer" (*Olshausen.*). God was even then sending forth labourers into His harvest.

A. D. 29.

3 Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves.

d Mark 6. 8. ch. 9. 3. e 2 Kin. 4. 29.

4 [d] Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and [e] salute no man by the way.

5 And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace *be* to this house.

6 And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again.

f 1 Cor. 10. 27. g 1 Cor. 9. 4, &c. 1 Tim. 5. 18.

7 And in the same house remain, [f] eating and drinking such things as they give: for [g] the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house.

8 And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you:

h ch. 9. 2.

9 [h] and heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, [i] The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

i ver. 11. Matt. 3. 2. & 4. 17.

10 But into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say,

k ch. 9. 5. Acts 13. 51. & 18. 6.

11 [k] Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you: notwithstanding be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

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3. "**Go your ways:**" &c. It is observable that many of the directions given to the Seventy are similar to those given to the Twelve, as we should naturally expect. Still it seems not improbable that St. Matthew, in his account of the Mission of the Twelve Apostles (St. Matt. x.), is grouping together our Lord's various directions as to the Pastoral Office, and thus may include some things spoken to the Seventy (See *Note* on St. Matt. x. 1.).

4. "**Salute no man.**" This is an expression implying great haste. The messengers had momentous work to do, and must not stop to greet friends or hold converse by the way. Salutations in the East were, and are to this day, so formal and ceremonious as to consume much time.

6. "**If the son of peace be there.**" By "son of peace" is meant one fit to receive the peace you offer. The expression answers to "If the house be worthy" (St. Matt. x. 13.).

7. "**Eating and drinking**" &c. That is, content with, and thankful for, whatever they have to give you. This suggests a reason for the command, "Go not from house to house": as though it were, 'Go not 'about seeking where you may fare best and be most agreeably enter-'tained.'

9. "**The kingdom of God is come nigh.**" At first that kingdom was "at hand." Now it is "come nigh." Afterwards St. Paul says, God "*hath translated* us into the kingdom of His dear Son" (Col. i. 13.).

12 But I say unto you, that [l]it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom, than for that city. A.D. 29.
[l] Mark 6. 11.

13 [m]Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! [n]for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.
[m] Matt. 11. 21.
[n] Ezek. 3. 6.

14 But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment, than for you.

15 [o]And thou, Capernaum, which art [p]exalted to heaven, [q]shalt be thrust down to hell.
[o] Matt. 11. 23.
[p] See Gen. 11. 4. Deut. 1. 28. Isai. 14. 13. Jer. 51. 53.
[q] See Ezek. 26. 20. & 32. 18.

16 [r]He that heareth you heareth Me; and [s]he that despiseth you despiseth Me; [t]and he that despiseth Me despiseth Him that sent Me.
[r] Mark 9. 37. John 13. 20.
[s] 1 Thess. 4. 8.
[t] John 5. 23.

17 ¶ And [u]the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through Thy name.
[u] ver. 1.

18 And He said unto them, [x]I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.
[x] John 12. 31. & 16. 11. Rev. 9. 1. & 12. 8, 9.

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12. "That day." "The day of judgment" (St. Matt. x. 15.). It is a very solemn and impressive way of speaking of it to call it "*that* day." It is that great day, which should be to us above all other days.

16. "He that despiseth" &c. How careful should this make us not to despise the message of those who bear Christ's commission and speak in His Name.

17—20. Return of the Seventy.

17. "The seventy returned." We cannot tell how long they had been absent, though probably not for long. Doubtless our Lord appointed them a certain number of days for their first absence, as it appears as though they all returned at the same time.

"Even the devils are subject" &c. This was plainly the uppermost thought in their minds. Their miraculous powers were to them a greater subject of rejoicing than either their personal hopes, or the blessedness of their office. So the Lord conveys to them a gentle rebuke, even while He confirms to them their powers.

18. "I beheld Satan" &c. The word "beheld" here is not to be understood of bodily sight but of spiritual contemplation. And the sudden fall of Satan spoken of is not his first fall with "the angels "which kept not their first estate" (St. Jude 6.), but his fall from great power and dominion through the coming of Christ his Conqueror. But *when* did our Lord behold this vision of the fall of the prince of darkness? Not alone, as might seem at first sight, at the time of the

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18. "*From heaven.*" "Heaven" is used by our Lord in the same sense of high dignity and position, when He speaks of Capernaum as "exalted unto heaven" (15.).

A.D. 29. 19 Behold, [y] I give unto you power to tread on
[y] Mark 16. 18. Acts 28. 5. serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

[z] Exod. 32. 32. Ps. 69. 28. Isai. 4. 3. Dan. 12. 1. Phil. 4. 3. Heb. 12. 23. Rev. 13. 8. & 20. 12. & 21. 27. 20 Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because [z] your names are written in heaven.

21 ¶ In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and

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absence of the Seventy, as though our Lord were describing the overthrow of Satan which they had been enabled to effect. The beholding "must be referred, not merely to the period during which the Seventy "were absent, but to past time in general, so that the meaning would "be,—Long ere this have I seen in spirit the power of evil as a thing "overthrown" (*Olshausen.*). We must not fail to remark here our Lord's plain witness to the existence, and the power, of the prince of evil spirits. If the prince is cast down, He would say to the Seventy, no marvel that his wicked servants—"the devils"—have lost their power too. We must mark our Lord's words at a still later period, "Now "shall the prince of this world be cast out" (St. John xii. 31.), as showing that Satan's power was not wholly destroyed, and had yet to receive a farther blow on Calvary. Perhaps we may say that our Lord's vision of Satan's fall pictured an overthrow, which, though indeed partly fulfilled then, still embraces the whole of the Gospel reign, and will not be finally accomplished till the end.

19. "**Behold, I give you power to tread**" &c. Evil in all forms, bodily as well as spiritual, is the fruit of sin. Christ here bestows power over every sort of evil, or rather confirms the power already silently bestowed. The fact that He does not appear to have named this power to the Seventy on first sending them forth, shows how much greater in His eyes was their message than their powers. There is a "more excellent way" than even the "best gifts" (1 Cor. xii. 31.). These miraculous powers were confirmed once more to the faithful before our Lord returned to heaven (St. Mark xvi. 17, 18.).

20. "**In this rejoice not,**" &c. Here is the gentle rebuke which our Lord utters to the Seventy. He would not have them despise the great gifts bestowed on them, which He had just solemnly confirmed, but He would not have them glory in them. They had a higher ground of rejoicing, even that their names were written in heaven,—that they were enrolled among the number of God's elect servants, to whom it is His good pleasure to give the kingdom. A blessed privilege indeed, and one which should make them rejoice, yet rejoice with trembling lest, called to such high privilege, any of them should through pride fall like "the angels which kept not their first estate" (St. Jude 6.).

21—24. God's truth revealed to the humble.

St. Matt. xi. 25—27. xiii. 16, 17.

21. "**Jesus rejoiced in spirit.**" Mark the difference between the rejoicing of the servants and that of their Lord. They rejoiced in the wondrous powers they possessed: He in the blessed truths made known

said, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in Thy sight. A.D. 29.

22 [a] [2] All things are delivered to Me of My Father: and [b] no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and *he* to whom the Son will reveal *Him*.

23 And He turned Him unto *His* disciples, and said privately, Blessed *are* the eyes which see the things that ye see:

24 for I tell you, [c] that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen *them;* and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard *them*.

25 ¶ And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and

[a] Matt. 28. 18. John 3. 35. & 5. 27. & 17. 2.
[2] Many ancient copies add these words, *And turning to His disciples, He said,*
[b] John 1. 18. & 6. 44, 46.
[c] 1 Pet. 1. 10.

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to the lowly. The ancient reading here seems to be, "rejoiced in the "Holy Ghost," which St. Cyril understands as meaning "rejoiced in "the works and miracles wrought by means of the Holy Ghost." But it seems more natural to understand such an expression as meaning 'rejoiced with that joy which the Holy Ghost bestows.' And if any think such an expression strange as spoken of the eternal Son of God, they must remember that it is no more strange than the truth that the Holy Ghost descended on our Lord at His Baptism (See on St. Matt. iii. 16. iv. 1.).

23. "He turned Him unto His disciples," &c. It appears from this that certain others had gathered round Him as He spoke to the Seventy. The saying here recorded as spoken "privately" was probably uttered in a low tone so as to be heard only by the disciples standing close to Him. It is recorded by St. Matthew as spoken on a different occasion, and, like many of our Lord's sayings, may well have frequently formed a part of His teaching at various times.

24. "Many prophets and kings." St. Peter speaks of the ancient prophets as "searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of "Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the "sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow" (1 St. Pet. i. 11.). *Their* language was at best, "I shall see Him, but not now" (Num. xxiv. 17.): *ours* is, "Mine eyes have seen Thy salvation" (St. Luke ii. 30.).

25—37. Parable of the Good Samaritan.

25. "A certain lawyer" &c. Like another lawyer on another occasion (See on St. Matt. xxii. 35.), this man does not appear to have had any evil design in his question. To 'tempt' only means to 'prove' or 'try', and the lawyer's object seems to have been simply to make trial of our Lord's learning, or to discover what His teaching was. The question this lawyer asked was indeed the most important any man can

A.D. 29. tempted Him, saying, [f] Master, what shall I do to
[f] Matt. 19. 16. & 22. 35. inherit eternal life?

26 He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?

27 And he answering said, **Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.**

Deut. 6. 5. Lev. 19. 18.

28 And He said unto him, Thou hast answered
[g] Lev. 18. 5. Neh. 9. 29. Ezek. 20. 11, 13, 21. Rom. 10. 5. right: this do, and [g] thou shalt live.

29 But he, willing to [h] justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?

[h] ch. 16. 15.

30 And Jesus answering said, A certain *man* went

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ask. It was the same which the gaoler at Philippi asked (Acts xvi. 30.), and which every man, who cares for his soul, must ask.

26. "What is written" &c. Christ refers him at once to that Law, which was his professed study, and in which he, as a lawyer, should have been well versed. It is as though He said, 'Thou art a lawyer, 'learned in the Scriptures: canst thou not find an answer to thy 'question there?' It is thought by some that our Lord may have pointed to the phylactery (See on St. Matt. xxiii. 5.) worn by this lawyer, upon which the first portion of his answer was probably written, this being a favourite text for the purpose.

27. "Thou shalt love" &c. This answer was the best the lawyer could have given, for it sums up our whole duty to God and man. "Love is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. xiii. 10.).

28. "This do, and thou shalt live." The lawyer had answered well, and blessed would he have been had his life been in accordance with his principles. That man cannot go wrong who loves God with all his heart and his neighbour as himself. How far are we all from this! Jesus would lead the lawyer to prove and test in action that which he acknowledged in word, and this would at once bring to light the shallowness of his view of that love of which he spoke so well. It would also at once reveal to him his own weakness and sinfulness. In trying to fulfil the law he would learn how far he was from really doing so, for "by the law is the knowledge of sin" (Rom. iii. 20.). And thus he would be brought to see and acknowledge his need of a Saviour, and of a better strength than his own (See on St. Matt. xix. 17.).

29. "Willing to justify himself." Wishing to make himself out just, and to show that he had really fulfilled the law of love so far as any had a claim upon him.

"And who is my neighbour?" This was a point upon which the Jewish doctors laid down many rules of their own invention, shutting out all foreigners from the narrow circle of their neighbourly love.

30. "A certain *man*" &c. In this parable our Lord does not reply to the question of the lawyer, but to the spirit which gave rise to it. He does not show who is to be looked upon as a neighbour claiming from us the rights of love, but who acts most in the spirit of true neighbourly love. When the lawyer would draw a line to mark off

down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded *him*, and departed, leaving *him* half dead. A.D. 29.

31 And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, [i] he passed by on the other side. [i] Ps. 38. 11.

32 And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked *on him*, and passed by on the other side.

33 But a certain [k] Samaritan, as he journeyed, [k] John 4. 9.

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his neighbour from others, he showed that he knew nothing of that love of which he was talking; for that love knows no line which it cannot pass, no point where the claims on it cease. With what Divine wisdom does Jesus here turn the lawyer's thoughts from the miserable disputes as to who is his neighbour upon his own heart and conscience.

"Went down." It is common in other countries besides our own to speak of going up to, and down from, the capital city.

"From Jerusalem to Jericho." Jericho was the second city in Judæa, nearly twenty miles from Jerusalem. It stood in a rich and beautiful plain, and was called "the city of palm-trees" (Judg. i. 16.). The road between Jerusalem and Jericho was wild and mountainous, and frequented by robbers, so that one part of it was called the 'red' or 'bloody way' from the murders committed there. It is worthy of notice that this parable appears to have been spoken at some period during our Lord's last journey towards Jerusalem, and that He approached Jerusalem from the direction of Jericho (See on St. Matt. xx. 29.), so that it is very possible that the scene of the parable was laid by our Lord at or near the very place where He was when He spoke it. And this is rendered the more probable from the immediate mention of Bethany afterwards (See on 38.).

31. "A certain priest." Many priests lived at Jericho, and would be frequently on the road between it and Jerusalem. Archbishop Trench well points out the wretched hypocrisy of this man in passing by a brother in such sore need of help, when the Law, in which the priests made their boast, and of which they were the teachers, was so careful in pressing the duties of compassion that it had twice said:—"Thou "shalt not see thy brother's ass or his ox fall down by the way, and "hide thyself from them: thou shalt surely help him to lift them up "again" (Exod. xxiii. 5. Deut. xxii. 4.). Here, not a brother's ox or his ass, but a brother himself, was lying in his blood, and he hid himself from him. Doubtless the danger of the robbers themselves being close at hand would hasten the steps of this selfish hard-hearted priest.

32. "A Levite." He too, though holding an inferior office in the Jewish Church, would, in his degree, be naturally expected to act according to the precepts of that law of which he must have been constantly the hearer.

33. "A certain Samaritan." That is, a stranger and an enemy (See on St. Matt. x. 5, and St. John iv. 9.), who would have every motive for leaving the wounded man to his fate.

A.D. 29. came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion *on him*,

34 and went to *him*, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

35 And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave *them* to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

36 Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?

"He had compassion." It was this which made the Samaritan a neighbour to his wounded fellow-creature. "It is not place, but love, "which makes neighbourhood" (*Wordsworth.*). The true neighbour is he who links himself to others by neighbourly love and sympathy.

34. **"Pouring in oil and wine."** These were much esteemed remedies for wounds in the East. Observe the unselfish care of this man, who forgetting his own danger, patiently dresses the wounds of the sufferer before he raises him from the ground.

"Set him on his own beast." Thus doubtless walking by his side.

"An inn." The inns in the East were usually large courtyards with buildings in which travellers might find shelter, but without any "host" to take care of them, the travellers taking with them all that they required. Our Lord however in this place speaks of an inn in which there was a resident "host," as in modern inns, so that some such doubtless existed in the Holy Land. We find the Samaritan not only bringing the wounded man to the inn, where he might have given him into the care of others, but continuing to watch over him as long as he stayed.

35. **"Two pence."** That is, about fifteen pence of our money. This however does not fairly describe the amount, for money was of more value then than now, so that a penny was the usual amount of a day's wages for a man (See on St. Matt. xx. 2.). It was also a day's pay for a Roman soldier.

Compassion in this Samaritan was no idle sentiment. It had its proper fruit in the willing bestowal both of trouble and of money upon its object.

36. **"Which now of these three,"** &c. The lawyer had asked, "Who is my neighbour?" Jesus teaches him to beware of the state

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35. *Two pence.*" Although it has not been thought well in this Commentary to alter the usually accepted value of the penny as given in the margin in various places, yet probably the value would be better expressed by ninepence than by sevenpence halfpenny. The denarius, or penny, contained sixty grains of silver, or one eighth of an ounce, which, if silver is reckoned at six shillings an ounce, would be exactly ninepence. The calculation however has little practical importance, since the real value of money depends upon the cost of the necessaries of life.

37 And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. A.D. 29.
Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

38 ¶ Now it came to pass, as they went, that He entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named [1] Martha received Him into her house. [1] John 11. 1. & 12. 2, 3.

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of heart out of which such a question could spring. He draws a picture of one who was a true neighbour in his compassion to others, and He bids the lawyer copy him. By so doing he would soon learn in practice to answer his own question, "Who is my neighbour?" He would find out that as soon as true neighbourly love dwelt in his own heart he would have occasion to ask that question no more.

The Church has in all ages traced in this beautiful parable a yet deeper meaning, seeing in the Good Samaritan a picture of Christ Himself. The wounded man, in this view, is human nature, stripped of original righteousness and well-nigh of life itself by him who was "a murderer from the beginning" (St. John viii. 44.). The Priest and the Levite represent the Law, which, whether by commandment or by sacrifice, had no power to save; for "by the deeds of the law there "shall no flesh be justified in His sight" (Rom. iii. 20.), and the sacrifices of the Law could not "make the comers thereunto perfect," or "take away sins" (Heb. x. 1—4.). But when Christ came, then came the healing of wounds and salvation. Though we were enemies, He did not pass us by. In the wine and the oil we may perhaps see "the Blood of His Passion and the anointing of the Holy Spirit" (*Trench*). In the Good Samaritan setting the wounded man on his own beast, while he walked himself on foot, we are reminded of Him who came "not to be ministered unto, but to minister" (St. Matt. xx. 28.). The inn may well be a type of the Church, whose work is the healing of souls, and the host a type of the stewards of Christ's mysteries, whom He bids to take care of His people till He comes again, bringing His reward with Him.

Archbishop Trench has well pointed out that our Church would lead us to take this deeper view of the Parable by selecting as the Epistle for the 13th Sunday after Trinity, when this Parable forms the Gospel, a passage (Gal. iii. 16—23.) which states the very truth conveyed by this view of the Parable, namely that righteousness and salvation are not by the Law but by Jesus Christ.

38—42. Martha and Mary.

38. "As they went." That is, upon their great journey which ended at Jerusalem (See on ix. 51.). Probably this visit to Bethany (which we must doubtless understand by "a certain village") took place at the time of the Feast of Dedication, some months before the last great scenes at Jerusalem, for that our Lord was present at that feast we are expressly told by St. John (x. 22.). Bethany was a small village on a rocky height nearly two miles from Jerusalem, Eastward, over the Mount of Olives (See *Map*). It was on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho, which road beyond Bethany is most wild and desolate, and is the scene of the foregoing Parable (See on 30.).

"Her house." This seems to imply that Martha was the elder

A.D. 29. 39 And she had a sister called Mary, [m] which also [n] sat at Jesus' feet, and heard His word.

40 But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to Him, and said, Lord, dost Thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.

41 And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things:

42 but [o] one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

[m] 1 Cor. 7. 32, &c.
[n] ch. 8. 35. Acts 22. 3.
[o] Ps. 27. 4.

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sister, and that her parents were dead. She was acting as mistress of the house.

39. "**Sat at Jesus' feet.**" This seems to have been while the meal was being prepared.

40. "**Cumbered.**" Literally, 'distracted,' or 'drawn in different 'directions.' In her great anxiety to do honour to her Guest, Martha scarcely knew which way to turn, and it grieved her to see her sister heedless of all her trouble, and wrapped up in her listening to Jesus.

41. "**Martha, Martha,**" **&c.** Our Lord's rebuke is very loving and gentle. He rebukes her not for her active service, but for being so full of care and trouble about it that she forgot for the time that any thing else could be of greater importance. Observe here how "careful" has its proper meaning of 'full of care.' It is the same word which our Lord uses, when He says "Take no thought" (See on St. Matt. vi. 25.).

42. "**One thing is needful.**" Martha was troubled about *many* things. Only *one* thing should be the object of real and deep anxiety. And that "one thing" was the "good part" Mary had chosen. By "good part" is meant 'good portion', with reference to the feast. Martha would prepare a great feast with many rich portions: Mary had chosen the one truly good portion, namely the "Bread of Life." Martha would feed her holy Guest with the best she had: Mary would rather be fed by Him. Jesus does not say that Martha had chosen a *bad* part: only Mary had chosen a better. And that good part should "not be taken "away from her." The Lord was her portion, and that portion she had for ever.

We may see in these two sisters examples of two very different classes of persons. Martha represents those who serve Christ in busy active labour; Mary those who serve Him in secret adoration and devotion. Each have their place in Christ's Church, and each win their blessing. But Christ Himself declares the latter the more blessed service. The former may be mere outward activity; the latter is closer to Himself. We can do better without labours than without devotion. It has been said that 'To labour is to pray.' Surely it is equally true that to pray is to labour in our Master's service. But we must not think our Lord desires us to draw a contrast between labours and devotion. His rebuke is for those who make light of devotion and would call others away from it to more active service. The best and truest life is one (like that of

CHAPTER XI.

1 *Christ teacheth to pray, and that instantly:* 11 *assuring that God so will give us good things.* 14 *He, casting out a dumb devil, rebuketh the blasphemous Pharisees:* 28 *and sheweth who are blessed:* 29 *preacheth to the people,* 37 *and reprehendeth the outward shew of holiness in the Pharisees, scribes, and lawyers.*

AND it came to pass, that, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, one of His disciples said unto Him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.

2 And He said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.

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angels) made up of *both* these forms of service—active labours and inward devotion.

"There are, in this loud stunning tide
Of human care and crime,
With whom the melodies abide
Of the everlasting chime;
Who carry music in their heart
Through dusky lane and wrangling mart,
Plying their daily task with busier feet,
Because their secret souls a holy strain repeat."

(*Christian Year.*)

CHAPTER XI.

1—13. Prayer, with the Lord's Prayer.

St. Matt. vi. 9—15. vii. 7—12.

1. **"As He was praying" &c.** This is evidently a different occasion from that on which the Lord's Prayer is given by St. Matthew. Then our Lord was speaking the Sermon on the Mount, which was near the beginning of His public ministry: now He is praying, and the event is related during the history of His last great journey. Then the Prayer was uttered in the midst of a longer discourse upon prayer; now it is given in answer to the request of one of the disciples.

"As John also taught" &c. We have no record of the prayer which St. John the Baptist taught his disciples, this being the only place in which the fact is alluded to at all.

2. **"When ye pray, say."** A distinct command to use a set form of words.

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2. "*Our Father*" *&c.* Whether our Lord gave on this occasion an exact repetition of the Prayer which He gave in the Sermon on the Mount, or no, is doubtful. If He uttered the Prayer, as is probable, in the popular language of the Jews (the Syro-Chaldaic), the differences may exist only in the Greek

A.D. 29.

3 Give us [2] day by day our daily bread.

[2] Or, *for the day.*

4 And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.

5 And He said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves;

[3] Or, *out of his way.*

6 for a friend of mine [3] in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him?

7 And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my

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3. "Day by day." Here is one of those slight differences in the form of words from St. Matthew's version in the Sermon on the Mount which does not affect the sense. The Greek literally translated is, 'Give us our daily bread, so far as regards each day,' that is, 'so far 'as for the needs of the passing day.'

4. "For we also forgive." Here again is a slight change from the form of words in the Sermon on the Mount, the "*As* we forgive" being here "*For* we forgive." But, since no one would ask to be forgiven *as* he forgave others, except one who really did forgive others, so we see the sense is the same.

The Friend at midnight.

5. "Which of you" &c. This short parable is very like that of the Unjust Judge (xviii. 1—8.), and teaches the same lesson, namely "that men ought always to pray and not to faint." The argument is similar to that in verse 13: If evil men will give good gifts to their children, *how much more* will our good and merciful Father in heaven. Here it is, If a selfish friend can be overcome by perseverance and importunity, *how much more* readily will a gracious God grant our petitions.

7. "Trouble me not." Does God ever seem thus to answer our cries for help? It is only in seeming. Our prayers can never trouble the ear of infinite Love. So the seeming refusal must not cast us into despair. Rather let us say, "Unto Thee will I cry, O Lord my "strength: think no scorn of me; lest, if Thou make as though Thou "hearest not, I become like them that go down into the pit" (Psalm xxviii. 1.).

"The door is now shut." The word for "shut" is the same which is used by St. John in describing our Lord's miraculous appearances among the disciples (St. John xx. 19, 26.), and means barred and fastened.

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translations of the two Evangelists, both of which may very well be translations of the same original. There is no reason however why our Lord may not have slightly varied the words of His Prayer, thus teaching us to set the sense above the form, which is only as the shell to the kernel.

children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. A.D. 29.

8 I say unto you, [a]Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth. [a] ch. 18. 1, &c.

9 [b]And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. [b] Matt. 21. 22. Mark 11. 24. John 15. 17. James 1. 6. 1 John 3. 22.

10 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

11 If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if *he ask* a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent?

12 Or if he shall ask an egg, will he [2]offer him a scorpion? [2] Gr. *give.*

13 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?

"With me." That is, as well as myself.

8. "Because of his importunity." Importunity means perseverance in asking, 'shamelessness' (literally) in continuing to urge his request. The same importunity will often win a blessing from God, but not (as in the case of the friend in the parable) by wearying Him. He is always ready to hear prayer, and when He seems to turn a deaf ear, it is for the purpose of bestowing some better blessing. The best illustration of this parable is the history of the Syro-phœnician woman (St. Matt. xv. 22—28.). Faith is both proved and strengthened by persevering prayer. A beautiful instance of such importunity is found in the history of the long-continued intercessions of Monica for the conversion of her son, afterwards the great Saint Augustine.

9. "Ask," &c. This and the following verses, though found also in the Sermon on the Mount (See on St. Matt. vii. 7—11.), fall in so naturally with our Lord's discourse here that we cannot doubt that they were spoken at the same time. What more likely than that such words were uttered on more than one occasion?

12. "A scorpion." A venomous reptile common in hot countries. This verse is not found in the Sermon on the Mount. The stone is simply unfit for food: the serpent and scorpion are positively mischievous: "so that God's answers to our prayers consist of neither "useless nor mischievous things" (*Alford.*).

13. "The Holy Spirit." As being the best of all those "good "things" spoken of in the parallel place in St. Matthew.

A.D. 29. 14 ¶ [c] And He was casting out a devil, and it was
[c] Matt. 9. 32. dumb. And it came to pass, when the devil was gone
out, the dumb spake; and the people wondered.
[d] Matt. 9. 34. 15 But some of them said, [d] He casteth out devils
[2] Gr. *Beelzebul*, and so ver. 18, 19. through [2] Beelzebub the chief of the devils.
16 And others, tempting *Him*, [e] sought of Him a
[e] Matt. 12. 38. & 16. 1. sign from heaven.
[f] John 2. 25. 17 But [f] He, knowing their thoughts, said unto
them, Every kingdom divided against itself is
brought to desolation; and a house *divided* against
a house falleth.
18 If Satan also be divided against himself, how
shall his kingdom stand? because ye say that I
cast out devils through Beelzebub.
19 And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by
whom do your sons cast *them* out? therefore shall
they be your judges.
[g] Ex. 8. 19. 20 But if I [g] with the finger of God cast out
devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come
upon you.
21 When a strong man armed keepeth his palace,
his goods are in peace:

14—23. The Accusation of casting out devils by Beelzebub.

St. Matt. xii. 22—30. St. Mark iii. 22—30.

14. "It was dumb." Causing dumbness and, as we know from St. Matthew, blindness also in the person afflicted.

16. "Others, tempting *Him*," &c. These were some of the Scribes and Pharisees, and the answer to them is given a little farther on (29—32.).

17. "Knowing their thoughts." The thoughts of those who said, either to themselves, or at least out of His hearing, "He casteth out "devils through Beelzebub."

20. "With the finger of God." That is, 'with the power of God,' the "finger" being here used as 'hand' and 'arm' are elsewhere for the putting forth of power. In St. Matthew it is "by the Spirit of God."

21. "When a strong man armed" &c. This is fuller than in the

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14. "*And He was*" &c. St. Luke seems here to break in upon his orderly narrative, collecting together a number of events and sayings without regard to the time when, or order in which, they occurred. There is nothing specially instructive in the exact order of the events, and therefore the inspired Evangelists do not make it of any importance. Indeed often it is more instructive to group together like sayings or events, though occurring at different times (See *Note* on St. Matt. x. 5.), than to present them in the true order of their occurrence. St. Luke proceeds to set forth Christ and His works and words without regard to historical order from this point probably as far as xiii. 21, the next verse, xiii. 22, taking up again the history of the last great journey.

22 but [h] when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils. A.D. 29. [h] Is. 53. 12. Col. 2. 15.

23 He that is not with Me is against Me: and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth.

24 ¶ When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out.

25 And when he cometh, he findeth *it* swept and garnished.

26 Then goeth he, and taketh *to him* seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter

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other Gospels. The "strong man armed" is Satan or Beelzebub. His "palace" is this world, of which *in its evil* he is prince. His "goods" are those who are "taken captive by him" (2 Tim. ii. 26.). And these are "in peace" so long as they rest content in their captivity, and love their prison. It is a fearful thing to be in the power of Satan at all: it is a still more fearful thing to be in his power, and yet to be "in "peace."

22. "But when a stronger than he" &c. If Christ had not been stronger than Satan, He could not have delivered his captives out of their bondage. By the "armour" of Satan is probably meant simply his powerful hold on his victims, or his power through their depravity and viciousness to resist the approach of good. By dividing his spoils is meant claiming, and devoting to good and holy use, those whom Satan had hitherto kept safely in his palace as his own "goods." When a conqueror takes a city or palace, the "spoils"—that is, the treasures found there—are divided among his army. Perhaps then we may see in our Lord's words here a hint of the reward promised to those who fight, under Him, to the rescuing of souls from Satan. Thus St. Paul calls his Thessalonian disciples his "crown of rejoicing," his "glory "and joy" (1 Thess. ii. 19, 20.). They were some of the "spoils" divided to him by the great Captain in the spoiling of the "strong man armed." No doubt our Lord in all this passage is speaking of the rescuing from Satan's power of those who, like Mary Magdalene and so many others, had been *possessed* by devils (See on St. Matt. viii. 28.), but we may well apply His words more widely, and understand them of the rescue of those who have been under the more ordinary power of the evil one.

24—26. The Return of the unclean spirit.

St. Matt. xii. 43—45.

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23. After this verse in St. Matthew, and in place of it in St. Mark, follows the passage concerning blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, which is briefly introduced by St. Luke in a later place (xii. 10.).

A.D. 29. in, and dwell there: and [i]the last *state* of that
[i] John 5. 14. Heb. 6. 4. & 10. 26. 2 Pet. 2. 20. man is worse than the first.

27 ¶ And it came to pass, as He spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up
[k] ch. 1. 28, 48. her voice, and said unto Him, [k]Blessed *is* the womb that bare Thee, and the paps which Thou hast sucked.

[l] Matt. 7. 21. ch. 8. 21. James 1. 25. 28 But He said, Yea [l]rather, blessed *are* they that hear the word of God, and keep it.

27, 28. A woman blesses Christ's Mother.

27. "**Blessed is the womb**" &c. The woman who spoke thus was doubtless deeply moved by the wisdom and dignity of our Lord's words as well as by the power of His works. We cannot but admire the courage with which she lifted up her voice in the midst of Scribes and Pharisees, whose anger she knew she must incur. With a woman's feelings she thought how blessed it must be to be the mother of One so great and good.

28. "**Yea rather,**" &c. This means, 'Yes, it is true; and yet 'still more blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it.' Christ by no means denies the blessedness of being His mother (See on St. Matt. xii. 50.). She herself had said, "All generations shall "call me blessed" (i. 48.). But there was a higher blessedness still, namely to hear and keep the word of God. Even the blessed Virgin herself was more blessed in hearing and keeping the word of God than in being the mother of the Lord. Elizabeth declared her true blessedness, when she said, "Blessed is she that believed" (i. 45.). And this higher blessedness all may share. There is a spiritual conception of Christ higher and holier than the bodily conception in the womb of the Virgin Mother. If "*Christ be formed in*" *us* (Gal. iv. 19.), by the putting on of "the new man, which after God is created in righteousness "and true holiness" (Eph. iv. 24.), then are we truly blessed; for blessed is the pure and holy soul that bears Him, and the lowly and contrite heart where He refuses not to dwell.

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27. It is thought by some probable that this incident and that related in viii. 19—21. occurred at the same time. In support of this we may observe that in St. Matthew and St. Mark the coming of our Lord's mother and brethren to seek for Him is placed at the conclusion of the foregoing conversation, in fact in the very place which this woman's blessing of Christ's mother holds here. In St. Matthew that event is introduced with the express words, "While "He yet talked to the people," whereas in St. Luke (viii. 19.) we have only the word "Then," which gives no exact mark of time. Thus it is argued with some reason that the first two Evangelists relate the coming of our Lord's mother and brethren in its exact place, namely in the same place in which St. Luke here relates the story of the woman blessing our Lord's mother. If this is the true account of the matter, it would seem that the mention of our Lord's mother being without may have suggested to the woman the thought of her blessedness. And then our Lord may have first answered the woman, and afterwards turned to the rest of the people with the words, "Who is My "mother", &c. as related in the other Gospels and in viii. 21.

29 ¶ And when the people were gathered thick together, He began to say, This is an evil generation: they seek a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet. A.D. 29.

30 For as [m] Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation. [m] Jonah 1. 17. & 2. 10.

31 [n] The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon *is* here. [n] 1 Kings 10. 1.

32 The men of Nineve shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for [o] they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas *is* here. [o] Jonah 3. 5.

33 ¶ [p] No man, when he hath lighted a candle, putteth *it* in a secret place, neither under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that they which come in may see the light. [p] Mark 4. 21. ch. 8. 16.

29—32. Seeking after a sign.

St. Matt. xii. 38—42.

29. "He began to say." In answer to those who, "tempting Him, "sought of Him a sign from heaven" (16.).

30. "As Jonas was a sign" &c. Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites by his miraculous deliverance from his three days living death, which he doubtless related in his preaching to them. So Christ would be a sign to that generation by His miraculous Resurrection from the dead. The Resurrection is continually appealed to by the Apostles as the great proof of Christ's divine mission.

33—36. The Light of Truth.

Compare St. Matt. v. 15. vi. 22, 23.

33. "No man, when he hath lighted" &c. This seems to have been a frequent saying of our Lord, used on various occasions, and applied in various ways. We have already met with it in this Gospel (viii. 16.). Here, as there, the "candle" seems to mean Christ's doctrine. The putting it on a candlestick here refers simply to the *publicity* with which Christ proclaimed Himself (and not, as may be the case in the other places, to the holding up of the light by the Church). Christ had told those who asked for a sign that they in their blindness were rejecting a greater than Solomon and a greater than Jonas. And in this verse He shows them that they might have

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29. "*When the people*" *&c.* From St. Matthew we should gather that this was towards the close of the present conversation, and just before the coming of His mother and brethren, who could not get to Him on account of the press.

A.D. 29. 34 The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when *thine eye* is evil, thy body also *is* full of darkness.

35 Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness.

36 If thy whole body therefore *be* full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when [2]the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light.

[2] Gr. *a candle by it's bright shining.*

37 ¶ And as He spake, a certain Pharisee besought Him to dine with Him: and He went in, and sat down to meat.

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seen and believed, had they pleased. He was come "the Light of the "world" (St. John viii. 12.), and held up that Light openly for all to see. So their blindness was wilful.

34. "The light of the body" &c. These verses are also found in the Sermon on the Mount. There they seem to teach that the whole inner man is lit with heavenly light when the *heart and affections* are set on things above. Here they teach that the same inward light is won by a clear *faith* in Christ and His Truth. We must not forget that the eye conveying light to the body is a parable. The parable may be stated thus: The eye is the light (literally, the candle) of the body. When the eye is pure and clear, it gives light to the whole body. When it is dull and defiled, it can give no light. Take heed then that that eye, which is meant to be your light, be not darkness through its wilful blindness. If it shine so as to fill the body with light, then is all around as bright and clear as a room lit up with a brightly shining lamp or candle. The spiritual meaning is not hard to see: The soul has an eye to give it light, even Faith. If Faith is clear and true, the soul is in light; if Faith is weak and dim, the soul is in darkness. Take care that that very Faith which should flood your soul with light, be not itself dark and blind. If it does shed the light of truth upon your soul, filling it with its brightness, then is your soul as full of light as a brightly lighted room.

37—54. Earlier woe to the Pharisees.

Compare St. Matt. xxiii.

37. "Besought Him to dine with him." This invitation was not one of pure friendliness, but, as in other cases (See vii. 36. and xiv. 1.), with a view to watching the words and conduct of our Lord.

"He went in." Our Lord refuses not the invitations even of those who are most unworthy to receive so holy a Guest. He is always

37—54. The present passage contains much that we also find in our Lord's last solemn denunciation of the Scribes and Pharisees contained in St. Matt. xxiii. Plainly our Lord uttered His woes on both occasions, and we must not confound the two. This was at a meal in a Pharisee's house, and certainly not at Jerusalem: that was in the Temple at Jerusalem, and on the last occasion on which

38 And [q] when the Pharisee saw *it*, he marvelled that He had not first washed before dinner. A. D. 29.

[q] Mark 7. 3.

39 And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but [r] your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness.

[r] Titus 1. 15.

40 *Ye* fools, did not He that made that which is without make that which is within also?

[s] Isai. 58. 7. Dan. 4. 27. ch. 12. 33.

41 [s] But rather give alms [2] of such things as

[2] Or, *as you are able.*

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ready to go where He may bestow a blessing, even though it be conveyed in the form, as here, of stern warning and rebuke.

38. "**He marvelled**" &c. Probably expressing his surprise aloud, and thus at the very first showing the captious and suspicious spirit in which he regarded his Guest (See on St. Matt. xv. 1—9.).

39. "**Your inward part**" &c. In the parallel passage in St. Matthew it is the inward part of the cup *and* platter which is spoken of, the parable being more exactly carried out. Here the figure and the thing signified by it are mingled together, the kernel as it were appearing through the shell. It is sometimes thought strange that our Lord should speak so strongly at a meal, and in condemnation of His host himself. But He who knew what was in man knew what His hearers needed, and no fancied courtesy would hinder Him from speaking that which was for their real good.

"**Ravening.**" The original word is translated "extortion" in St. Matt. xxiii. 25. It means greedy avarice, and plunder.

40. "**Ye fools,**" &c. That is, How can ye imagine that so shallow and incomplete a cleansing as that of the bare outside of your conduct can satisfy God, who made soul as well as body, and looks for the cleansing of the whole man, within and without?

41. "**But rather give alms**" &c. The words "such things as ye "have" are literally 'the things that are within.' This may perhaps mean no more than 'the things ye possess'; but it seems better to understand it as referring to the "inward part" spoken of in the last two verses. That "inward part" our Lord had pronounced to be full of greedy covetousness. He now says, 'Be not content with the cleans-'ing of the outside, which can never satisfy God, but rather give as 'your alms that which is within, and the outside shall be clean also.' The meaning of this command would be, 'In your almsgiving give 'more than a mere outside gift which costs you little; give the very 'contents of the vessel, something real and substantial, which will 'compel the sacrifice of your covetous desires, and so cleanse the whole 'man.' It is true giving alms is in some sort an outside duty, and one in which the Pharisees took pride (See St. Matt. vi. 2.), and therefore it may seem strange that our Lord should set it in contrast with

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our Lord visited the Temple. It is not strange that He, whose words were not like the words of others—simply the best which occurred to the speaker at the time, but absolutely and always the best which could express His meaning, should have used the same words at different times to express the same things. This discourse in the Pharisee's house seems to be a forestalling and anticipation of the more full and solemn and formal discourse in the Temple just before the Passion (See *Note* on St. Matt. xxiii. 1.).

A.D. 29. ye have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you.

42 But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

t Mark 12. 38, 39. 43 t Woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets.

44 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! u Ps. 5. 9. for ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over *them* are not aware *of them*.

45 Then answered one of the lawyers, and said unto Him, Master, thus saying Thou reproachest us also.

46 And He said, Woe unto you also, *ye* lawyers!

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their shallow outward observances; but He has spoken of their "raven-"ing" as belonging to the *inward* part, and this sin must be corrected by a true charity, showing itself in liberal almsgiving, also in the *inward* part. Doubtless the almsgiving here spoken of by Christ is that secret and humble almsgiving recommended in the Sermon on the Mount (St. Matt. vi. 3.), and something very different from the wretched display of the Pharisee "to be seen of men."

"Behold, all things are clean unto you." It would be a grievous perversion of this text to suppose our Lord to teach that almsgiving, however pure and noble, sanctifies all other things. He only uses it as an example of a grace which, among many others, His hearers lacked, and He means, Take care to secure the inward grace, and you need fear no defilements from the neglect of those little outward observances which you think so important. Not outward washings but inward charity will make you clean.

44. "As graves which appear not." This is a different use of the figure from that in St. Matthew. There the Pharisees are compared to "whited sepulchres"—fair outside but full of all uncleanness within. Here they are compared to tombs which, instead of being "whited," are grass-grown and unseen, so that men are defiled by passing over them without knowing. The meaning is that the iniquity of the Pharisees was so secret and unsuspected that their pupils and followers caught, without knowing it, their false hypocritical spirit.

45. "One of the lawyers." Why this lawyer imagined his own class to be included in our Lord's condemnation is not clear. Perhaps because our Lord had addressed the Scribes (44.), between whom and the Lawyers there was little difference (See on St. Matt. xxii. 35.): perhaps because he was conscious that he made much of those outward ceremonies which Christ condemned.

46. "Woe unto you also, ye lawyers!" Our Lord accepts this lawyer's classing of himself with the Pharisees, and pronounces woe against him and his class for the very things which He afterwards charges against the Scribes and Pharisees (St. Matt. xxiii. 4.).

for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, A.D. 29.
and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one
of your fingers.

47 Woe unto you! for ye build the sepulchres of
the prophets, and your fathers killed them.

48 Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds
of your fathers: for they indeed killed them, and
ye build their sepulchres.

49 Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will
send them prophets and apostles, and *some* of them
they shall slay and persecute:

50 that the blood of all the prophets, which was
shed from the foundation of the world, may be
required of this generation;

51 [x] from the blood of Abel unto [y] the blood of
Zacharias, which perished between the altar and
the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be
required of this generation.

52 Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken
away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in
yourselves, and them that were entering in ye
[z] hindered.

[x] Gen. 4. 8.
[y] 2 Chron. 24. 20, 21.
[z] Or, *forbad.*

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48. "Truly ye bear witness" &c. By their very building of these sepulchres, as though they honoured and followed the Prophets, while in their secret hearts they were as unlike them as could be, the Pharisees and lawyers showed themselves true descendants of their self-righteous and obstinate fore-fathers, who would not receive God's calls to repentance, but persecuted and slew the Prophets (See on St. Matt. xxiii. 31.). In a very little time they would prove themselves yet more like their fathers by their rejection and murder of Christ Himself.

49. "The wisdom of God." It is very note-worthy that in the later discourse Christ speaks in language of higher authority, saying, "Behold, *I* send" (St. Matt. xxiii. 34.). He is in the deepest truth the "Wisdom of God." Yet we are not to understand that He simply speaks of Himself by this title. He is speaking of God's Wisdom as it revealed itself in His dealings with His people of old. He is not quoting any distinct passage, but is probably (as Alford points out) referring to the passage in which the martyrdom of Zechariah is recorded (2 Chron. xxiv. 19—22.), where we find mention of God's sending His Prophets, of their rejection, of the special rejection and martyrdom of Zechariah, and of his last words (very different from St. Stephen's) asking that his blood might be thus "required."

52. "The key of knowledge." That is, either the key which opens the door to true knowledge,—namely, the right interpretation of the Scriptures; or, perhaps better still, the key which *is* knowledge, and which opens the door to the kingdom of heaven. According to the

A. D. 29. 53 And as He said these things unto them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to urge *Him* vehemently, and to provoke Him to speak of many things:

z Mark 12. 13. 54 laying wait for Him, and [z] seeking to catch something out of His mouth, that they might accuse Him.

CHAPTER XII.

1 *Christ preacheth to His disciples to avoid hypocrisy, and fearfulness in publishing His doctrine:* 13 *warneth the people to beware of covetousness, by the parable of the rich man who set up greater barns.* 22 *We must not be over careful of earthly things,* 31 *but seek the kingdom of God,* 33 *give alms,* 36 *be ready at a knock to open to our Lord whensoever He cometh.* 41 *Christ's ministers are to see to their charge,* 49 *and look for persecution.* 54 *The people must take this time of grace,* 58 *because it is a fearful thing to die without reconciliation.*

a Matt. 16. 6. Mark 8. 15. IN [a] the mean time, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trode one upon another, He began

b Matt. 16. 12. to say unto His disciples first of all, [b] Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.

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view taken of the key of knowledge will be that of the entering in; which will signify either into that true knowledge, of which they had the key, or else into that kingdom, the key of which is the knowledge of God's word.

53. "To urge Him vehemently." That is, 'to press Him eagerly.' This shows the spirit of those who had gone through the formality of asking Him to visit them (See on 37.).

54. "To catch something" &c. This means, to induce Him to utter some words, which they might use for the purpose of accusing Him.

CHAPTER XII.

1—9. Exhortation to the Disciples.

St. Matt. x. 26—33.

1. "Beware ye of the leaven" &c. This figure of "leaven" our Lord used on quite a different occasion in warning His disciples against the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees (See on St. Matt. xvi. 6.).

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1. "*He began to say.*" Most of this chapter is to be found in various parts of St. Matthew's Gospel, chiefly in the Sermon on the Mount (vi.), the missionary charge (x.), and the concluding part of the great prophecy of the coming of Christ (xxiv.). These various portions are here gathered together into one seemingly continuous discourse, interrupted only by the important passage 12—21, which is found only in St. Luke. How are we to explain this? Plainly much weight must be given to the consideration that it may have been our Lord's habit frequently to repeat the same sayings (See *Note* on xi. 37—54.). This consideration however does not fully meet the question, especially in regard to the longer passages such as are met with in this chapter. We must then also give due weight to the fact, frequently named in other places, that the Evangelists do not seek to give all the events and sayings they record in their exact order, but often group them together so as to present them in the most striking and

A. D. 29.

2 [c] For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known.

[c] Mark 4. 22. ch. 8. 17.

3 Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops.

4 [d] And I say unto you [e] My friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do.

[d] Isai. 51. 7, 8, 12, 13. Jer. 1. 8.
[e] John 15. 14, 15.

5 But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear Him, which after He hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear Him.

6 Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God?

7 But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows.

8 [f] Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God:

[f] Mark 8. 38. 2 Tim. 2. 12. 1 John 2. 23.

9 but he that denieth Me before men shall be denied before the angels of God.

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2. "For there is nothing" &c. This seems to have been a frequent saying of our Lord (See viii. 17.). Here it is applied to the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, as declaring how vain is the attempt to dissemble and cloak the real character before God, who will bring every thing to light at the last day.

4. "My friends." Observe, the following exhortation is spoken to the disciples, Christ's "*friends*," though in the presence and hearing of a large multitude. They are Christ's friends, who do His commandments (St. John xv. 14, 15.). The words, "My friends," are not the beginning of the exhortation which follows, but are to be taken with the preceding word "you."

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instructive form (See *Note* on St. Matt. x. 1.). Of course it is very difficult—often quite impossible—to decide upon particular sayings occurring under seemingly different circumstances in different Gospels, whether they were really spoken on both occasions, or, if not, which Gospel (if either) has them in their true historical place. We may thank God that to decide such questions is of no practical importance. But one thing should be borne in mind, namely that whatever is introduced by certain plain marks of time, or historical connection, must belong to such time or connection. The Evangelists did not *invent* occasions for introducing Christ's sayings. Thus in the beginning of this chapter it is plain that our Lord addressed His disciples concerning the hypocrisy of the Pharisees in the presence of a large multitude. But how much of the discourse which follows was spoken on the same occasion, or how much grouped together for our instruction, we cannot tell. No attempt therefore will be made to fix the time or occasion of the sayings in this chapter which are also found in St. Matthew. The reader is referred to that Gospel for their explanation.

A. D. 29.

g 1 John 5. 16.

10 ¶ And g whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven.

11 ¶ And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and *unto* magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say:

12 for the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say.

13 ¶ And one of the company said unto Him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me.

h John 18. 36.

14 And He said unto him, h Man, who made Me a judge or a divider over you?

i 1 Tim. 6. 7, &c.

15 And he said unto them, i Take heed, and be-

10. Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.

St. Matt. xii. 31, 32. St. Mark iii. 28—30.

10. "Whosoever" &c. This saying is in the other Gospels closely connected with the accusation made against our Lord of casting out devils through Beelzebub, so that it is quite clear *that* is its true historical place. (See *Note* on xi. 23.) It follows however here so naturally after the mention of denying Christ that it may very well have been spoken by our Lord in this connection also.

11—12. On the power of speech given by the Holy Ghost.

St. Matt. x. 19, 20. St. Mark xiii. 11, 12. Compare on xxi. 14, 15.

13—21. Parable of the Rich Fool.

13. "One of the company said." It appears as though this man, in his anxiety about his own affairs, interrupted our Lord in the midst of His conversation, or at least seized on the first vacant moment.

"Speak to my brother," &c. We need not doubt the justness of this man's claim. Indeed the parable which follows is a rebuke, not to injustice and wrong, but to covetousness.

14. "Who made Me a judge" &c. Our Lord distinctly refuses on all occasions to meddle with the temporal affairs of men. Observe the case of the tribute-money (St. Matt. xxii. 21.), and of the woman taken in adultery (St. John viii. 7.). He came to establish a spiritual kingdom, which was indeed in its growth to leaven the whole world, but any interference in worldly concerns then would only have encouraged the false notions of the Messiah which prevailed among the Jews, who looked for a temporal King and Deliverer.

ware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. A.D. 29.

16 And He spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:

17 and he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?

18 And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

19 And I will say to my soul, [k] Soul, thou hast

[k] Eccles. 11. 9. 1 Cor. 15. 32. James 5. 5.

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15. "**Covetousness.**" Our Lord at once proceeds to attack the evil which was at the root of the man's request. He who "knew what was "in man" saw perfectly the true motive of his request.

"**A man's life.**" That is, his true life—that life which is alone worthy of the name—his spiritual and eternal life (See on St. Matt. x. 39.). This in no way consists in outward things. It is neither bestowed, nor kept alive, nor strengthened, by them. "Man doth not live by "bread alone." Bread nourishes the life of the body, but the true life is of heaven, and has heavenly food.

16. "**The ground of a certain rich man**" &c. Archbishop Trench (from whose admirable book upon the Parables much is borrowed, here as elsewhere,) points out the truth that the danger of riches increases with their increase. Abundance serves, not as water to quench, but as fuel to augment, the fire of covetousness. Thus the Psalmist's advice is very needful, "If riches increase, set not your heart upon them" (Ps. lxii. 10.). And very wise is the prayer of Agar, "Give me neither "poverty *nor riches*" (Prov. xxx. 8, 9.).

17. "**What shall I do,**" &c. St. Ambrose answers this man's question for him, 'Thou hast barns enough,' he says,—'the bosoms 'of the needy, the houses of widows, the mouths of orphans and 'infants.' In those barns he could store up his goods to find them again in heaven. St. Augustine has a noble passage addressed to one perplexed with the abundance of his goods, and so in danger of losing them: 'God does not wish you to lose your riches; only to change their 'place. If a friend, finding that you had stored your corn in a damp 'room, where it was rotting away, were to advise you to remove it to a 'higher chamber, where it would be safe, you would listen to his advice; 'yet you will not listen to Christ bidding you raise your treasure from 'earth to heaven, where you will receive—not indeed what you have 'thus laid up, but—instead of these perishable things things eternal, 'instead of earth heaven.'

18. "**My fruits and my goods.**" How like the world he speaks, as though all were his own, and he might do what he liked with his own.

19. "**Soul, thou hast much goods**" &c. Verily a most true picture

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15. "*For a man's life*" *&c.* The literal translation of this sentence is as follows: 'For not, in the case of any man having 'abundance, does his life consist in the 'things which he possesses.'

A.D. 29. much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, *and* be merry.

20 But God said unto him, *Thou* fool, this night [2] [l] thy soul shall be required of thee: [m] then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?

21 So *is* he that layeth up treasure for himself, [n] and is not rich toward God.

22 ¶ And He said unto His disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on.

23 The life is more than meat, and the body *is more* than raiment.

24 Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and

[2] Or, *do they require thy soul.*
[l] Job 20. 22. & 27. 8. Ps. 52. 7. James 4. 14.
[m] Ps. 39. 6. Jer. 17. 11.
[n] ver. 33. Matt. 6. 20. 1 Tim. 6. 18, 19. James 2. 5.

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of many a man whom the world honours and approves. Is it so rare a thing for a man who has either made, or inherited, a goodly portion of wealth, to lay his plans for the future, exactly as this man in the parable did, with the sole view of pleasing self, and enjoying his good fortune?

20. "But God said unto him." We need not in these words understand any forewarning to be given to the man. God spake to him in the decree which ended his silly dream, and cut short his selfish projects.

"Required of thee." The righteous joyfully commits his soul to God: from the wicked it is exacted with stern terror. "For he is not "as a ship, which has been long waiting in harbour, and joyfully, when "the signal is given, lifts its anchor, and makes sail for the harbour of "eternity; but like the ship which by some fierce wind is dragged from "its moorings, and driven furiously to perish on the rocks" (*Trench.*).

21. "So is he" &c. Thus does Christ point the Parable against the man whose petition gave rise to it, and against all who lay up treasure upon earth. For be it much, or be it little, upon which the heart is set, it matters not. There may be rich men who have their treasure above, and poor men who have it below; for where the heart is, there is the treasure. And the true riches may be lost for a little handful as surely as for thousands of gold and silver.

22—34. Discourse to the Disciples upon Trust in God.

St. Matt. vi. 19—33.

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22. "*Therefore I say*" *&c.* The following passage would most naturally spring out of the foregoing parable, and the word "Therefore" appears at first sight to join it closely to it. But in the Sermon on the Mount the same passage begins with the word "Therefore," and follows (with a break of a few verses) the passage upon heavenly treasure which is here given after it. We cannot then say for certain that we have that mark of historical connection (See *Note* on 1.) here, which would oblige us to consider this a continuation of the same discourse. It is quite possible this passage may be a part of the Sermon on the Mount, given here on account of its appropriateness to the foregoing parable, the word "Therefore" being only part of the quotation.

[o] God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls? A.D. 29.

[o] Job 38. 41. Ps. 147. 9.

25 And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit?

26 If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest?

27 Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

28 If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field, and to morrow is cast into the oven; how much more *will He clothe* you, O ye of little faith?

29 And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, [2] neither be ye of doubtful mind.

[2] Or, *live not in careful suspense.*

30 For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things.

31 But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you.

32 Fear not, little flock; for [p] it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

[p] Matt. 11. 25, 26.

[q] Mat. 19. 21. Acts 2. 45. & 4. 34.

33 [q] Sell that ye have, and give alms; [r] provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in

[r] ch. 16. 9. 1 Tim. 6. 19.

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32. "**Fear not, little flock.**" Thus speaks the Good Shepherd, and very blessed are His words. What hope and joy are ours in seeking the kingdom of God, when we know that it is God's good pleasure to give it us! God has called us to be inheritors of that kingdom: He destines us for it, and it for us: He gives us all needful helps in winning it. We have then none but ourselves to blame, if we lose it at last. We may notice that this is the only verse in this passage, which does not belong to the Sermon on the Mount, and yet it follows so naturally and so beautifully upon the verse before (31.) that a very thoughtful and reverent commentator (*Stier*) thinks that it must have always formed part of the same discourse. (On the word "kingdom" see on St. Matt. xiii. 43.)

33. "**Sell that ye have,**" &c. Almsgiving then is not to be the bestowal of our superfluity. It is something serious and real. Moreover it is not alone for the benefit of those to whom the alms are given. It is also, and even more, for the benefit of the giver, "in the release of "the heart from the devotion to worldly goods" (*Stier.*). (Compare on St. Matt. xix. 21.)

"**Bags which wax not old.**" Purses, which will keep your treasures safely. What are these but the empty bags of the needy? Put your money there, and you shall not lose it (See on 17.). So far this verse differs in form of expression, though not in general meaning, from that

A.D. 29. the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.

34 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

s Eph. 6. 14. 1 Pet. 1. 13. t Matt. 25. 1, &c.

35 ¶ s Let your loins be girded about, and t *your* lights burning;

36 and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.

37 Blessed *are* those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.

38 And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find *them* so, blessed are those servants.

u 1 Thes. 5. 2. 2 Pet. 3. 10. Rev. 3. 3. & 16. 15.

39 u And this know, that if the goodman of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through.

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in the Sermon on the Mount (St. Matt. vi. 19.). The remainder is the same.

35—48. Discourse upon Watchfulness.

St. Matt. xxiv. 42—51.

35. "**Let your loins be girded about.**" As for active running or labour, for which the long loose outer garment of the Jew was rolled up and twisted round the waist.

"**Your lights burning.**" This is best illustrated by the parable of the Ten Virgins (St. Matt. xxv. 1—13.).

36. "**Ye yourselves.**" That is, in your whole conduct and character. The mention of the "wedding" here again reminds us of the parable of the Ten Virgins, though the opening of the door at the Bridegroom's coming is no part of that parable, but brings us at once to the passage in the chapter before (St. Matt. xxiv. 42—51.), with which the remainder of the present passage is parallel.

37. "**He shall gird himself,**" &c. The master waiting on his servants! Even so; for then shall the great Master, in the fulness of His love, minister to all, feeding all with the best portions of the great marriage-feast, pouring out for all new draughts of heavenly joy (See on xvii. 8.). By "come forth" is meant 'pass along' from one to another. "The "washing of the feet at the last supper was a type and pledge of this; "even as every renewal of His holy Supper is a foretaste and prophecy "of that heavenly feast, of which it is said, 'Eat, O friends, drink; yea, "'drink abundantly, O beloved' (Cant. v. 1.)" (*Stier.*). "Blessed are they "which are called unto the marriage-supper of the Lamb" (Rev. xix. 9.).

40 [x] Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not. A.D. 29.

41 Then Peter said unto Him, Lord, speakest Thou this parable unto us, or even to all?

42 And the Lord said, [y] Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom *his* lord shall make ruler over his household, to give *them their* portion of meat in due season?

43 Blessed *is* that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

44 Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath.

45 But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken;

46 the lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for *him*, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will [2] cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.

47 And [z] that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not *himself*, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many *stripes*.

[x] Matt. 25. 13. Mark 13. 33. ch. 21. 34, 36. 1 Thess. 5. 6. 2 Pet. 3. 12.

[y] Matt. 25. 21. 1 Cor. 4. 2.

[2] Or, *cut him off.*

[z] Num. 15. 30. Deut. 25. 2. John 9. 41. & 15. 22. Acts 17. 30. Jam. 4. 17.

41. "**Then Peter said**" &c. St. Peter desires to know whether the parable as to watching is meant for those who, like himself and his brother Apostles, were specially charged with the duty of watching over the Lord's household, or whether the warning is a general one applying equally to all. Our Lord does not answer this enquiry one way or the other, but continues His discourse, leaving the Apostle to draw his own answer from it. That answer would be, that the lesson is for all, but for each according to the work entrusted to him by the great Master.

42. "**Whom his lord shall make**" &c. This does not refer to the time of the Lord's coming again, but of His going away, as though it were, 'Who of you is so faithful and wise a servant, as to be entrusted 'with so high a trust?' Such a servant may, if faithful, look for a blessing great in proportion to his trust; and this final blessing is that spoken of in 44, "He will make him ruler over all that he hath." The first rule (42.) is over the household on earth: the second rule (44.) is over the saints in glory.

46. "**Unbelievers.**" "St. Matthew has 'hypocrites' in the parallel "passage. Probably the heavenly Teacher used both terms, and each "Evangelist adopted that which best suited his purpose, St. Matthew as "writing among hypocritical Jews, and St. Luke among Gentile un-"believers" (*Archd. Churton.*).

47. "**That servant, which knew**" &c. This would include all Christian people generally, for all such either know, or might have known, their Lord's will. And in proportion to their knowledge is their guilt, if they disobey that will.

A.D. 29. 48 [a] But he that knew not, and did commit things
[a] Lev. 5. 17. 1 Tim. 1. 13. worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few *stripes*. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.

[b] ver. 51. 49 ¶ [b] I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled?

[c] Matt. 20. 22. Mark 10. 38. 50 But [c] I have a baptism to be baptized with; [2] Or, *pained*. and how am I [2] straitened till it be accomplished!

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48. "**He that knew not.**" This must certainly include the heathen world, who have had no opportunity of knowing, and whose guilt therefore in like transgressions is far less than ours, and punishment lighter. It may also include some in Christian lands, who through the vice or neglect of others have been left in ignorance by no fault of their own.

"**For unto whomsoever**" &c. This declares the perfect justice of God's final judgment. He alone can weigh all opportunities and circumstances in each one's life, and His judgment cannot err. This lesson is fully drawn out in the parable of the Talents (St. Matt. xxv. 14—30.).

49—53. The effects of Christ's coming.

St. Matt. x. 34—36.

49. "**To send fire on the earth.**" The word translated "to send" is literally 'to cast,' and "the fire" seems to be the discord and persecution which was to gather round the name of Christ, and which He speaks of here as "division", and in St. Matthew as a "sword." Or perhaps it would be more accurate to say "the fire" means that kindling and inflaming of men's minds of which the "division" and the "sword" were the result. It is almost as if our Lord had said, 'I am come to set the 'earth on fire' (See Is. iv. 4, and Mal. iii. 2.).

"**What will I, if it be already kindled?**" This is a very difficult expression, and different explanations of it are given. Perhaps the simplest is to understand it as meaning, 'What *other* wish have I', or 'What do I desire *different*, if it be already kindled?' Another way of explaining it is to put the question after "What will I", and to understand the "if" as an expression of strong desire (as in "If thou hadst "known"—xix. 42.), thus: 'What do I desire? *If only* it were already 'kindled!' The first explanation expresses contentment in the fire being already kindled, the second a longing that it were so. But why should our Lord thus express His desire for, or at least contentment with, the kindling of the fire? The next verse may give the reason.

50. "**I have a baptism**" &c. This "baptism" is the baptism of Blood,—the Cross and Passion to which our Lord was now drawing nigh (See on St. Matt. xx. 22, 23.).

"**How am I straitened**" &c. That is, 'How am I troubled and

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50. "*But.*" This word may not be pressed here. The little Greek word translated "But" frequently serves "merely to pass from one thing to "another," and sometimes has almost the force of '*For*.' This will help to clear the connection between these two verses.

51 [d] Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; [e] but rather division: A.D. 29.
[d] ver. 49. [e] Mic. 7. 6. John 7. 43. & 9. 16. & 10. 19.
52 for from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three.
53 The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

54 ¶ And He said also to the people, [f] When ye see a cloud rise out of the west, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower; and so it is.
[f] Matt. 16. 2.
55 And when *ye see* the south wind blow, ye say, There will be heat; and it cometh to pass.
56 *Ye* hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not discern this time?
57 Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?

'oppressed in spirit.' "As the time drew nigh, when He would pass "beneath the deep waters of affliction, He was 'straitened' by those, "to us unknown, mental agonies, which would seem to have reached "their head in the garden of Gethsemane. The bands of our sins "pinioned, as it were, His loving arms, and the burden of our iniquities "weighed down His soaring spirit" (*Prescott.*). Thus He longed for the time to come. Perhaps His Human nature longed for the shortening of the time of awful waiting. And this will explain the manner in which He spoke in the last verse of the kindling of the "fire", which was to inflame men's minds so as to bring about that baptism of Blood, wherewith He was to be baptized.

51. "Nay; but rather division." The reason why our Lord dwells upon this (the explanation of which is given in St. Matthew's Gospel) is to save His disciples from disappointment, and to prepare them for what might have staggered their faith, had they not received this forewarning.

54—59. Ignorance of the Signs.

54. "He said also to the people." Turning apparently from the little band of disciples close to Him to address in louder tones those standing around. Very similar language was addressed to the Pharisees and Sadducees on another occasion, where, though the signs are somewhat different, the general lesson is the same (See on St. Matt. xvi. 2, 3.).

56. "Ye hypocrites." Because they could, if they chose, judge quite as easily of the signs of the times, as of those of the weather.

57. "Why even of yourselves" &c. Why even *without signs*, by

A. D. 29.

58 [g] When thou goest with thine adversary to the magistrate, [h] *as thou art* in the way, give diligence that thou mayest be delivered from him; lest he hale thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and the officer cast thee into prison.

59 I tell thee, thou shalt not depart thence, till thou hast paid the very last [2] mite.

[g] Prov. 25. 8. Matt. 5. 25.
[h] See Psal. 32. 6. Isai. 55. 6.
[2] See Mark 12. 42.

CHAPTER XIII.

1 *Christ preacheth repentance upon the punishment of the Galilæans, and others.* 6 *The fruitless fig tree may not stand.* 11 *He healeth the crooked woman:* 18 *sheweth the powerful working of the word in the hearts of His chosen, by the parable of the grain of mustard seed, and of leaven:* 24 *exhorteth to enter in at the strait gate,* 31 *and reproveth Herod and Jerusalem.*

THERE were present at that season some that told Him of the Galilæans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.

2 And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galilæans were sinners above all the Galilæans, because they suffered such things?

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that light of conscience and reason which God has given you, do ye not judge rightly of Me and of My doctrine?

58. "When thou goest" &c. This seems to be a brief parable, setting forth the necessity of speedy repentance. It is not wise to press every part of the passage into a spiritual meaning. The general lesson would be that, as you would do your best to make up the difference with an adversary, who had you in his power, to escape being cast into prison, so would you, if you judged what is right (57.), do your best, while the time of grace lasts,—while yet "in the way" to judgment,—to flee from the wrath to come (See on St. Matt. v. 25, 26.).

CHAPTER XIII.

1—5. How to regard God's judgments.

1. "The Galilæans, whose blood" &c. Nothing is known of the event here named. Probably these Galilæans had taken part in some movement against the Roman government, and Pilate had ordered his soldiers to fall upon them while offering sacrifice in the outer court of the Temple (See on xxiii. 12.). Those who spoke to our Lord thought that so fearful a death proved the great sinfulness of those on whom it fell, or at least they wished for our Lord's opinion on this which was probably a popular view. It has always been a temptation with ignorant people to suppose heavy afflictions to be proofs of great sin. This was the argument of Job's friends, who continually urged upon him that he could not be in such distress except through his own fault (Job iv. 7. viii. 2—14, 20. xxii. 5.).

2. "Suppose ye" &c. Our Lord's answer is very valuable as teaching us how to regard God's judgments. We are not to regard them as

3 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall A.D. 29.
all likewise perish.

4 Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were [2] sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem?

[2] Or, *debtors*, Matt. 18. 24. ch. 11. 4.

5 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

6 ¶ He spake also this parable; [a] A certain *man*

[a] Isai. 5. 2. Matt. 21. 19.

special punishments for the special sins of the sufferers; but we are to regard them as general warnings against sin, and as calls to repentance (See on St. John ix. 3.). It is very possible that those who came to our Lord may have hoped that in answering their doubts about the special sinfulness of these Galilæans He would take occasion to condemn the cruel and sacrilegious conduct of the Roman governor, and so have exposed Himself to his wrath. We see here however, as ever, how strictly our Lord forbore to mix Himself up with any political or state question (See on xii. 14.); and also with what wisdom He ever turned His questioners back upon their own consciences.

3. "I tell you, Nay:" &c. Whenever we hear or read of any terrible calamity, how are we to regard it? Not as telling us anything concerning the sufferers themselves;—we are not their judges, and we are expressly told that their sufferings are no proof that they were greater sinners than others, or than we ourselves:—but as an awakening call to repentance, inasmuch as such a calamity, however awful, is but a faint shadow of that everlasting destruction which shall overwhelm us, if we repent not. Perhaps in the word "likewise" (meaning 'in 'like manner') our Lord may have had in view the fearful destruction of Jerusalem, when a vast number of the Jews were actually slain in and about the Temple: though of course His words have a wider meaning also.

4. "Or those eighteen." Our Lord Himself brings forward this second instance of a terrible calamity, no doubt fresh in the minds of His hearers, to show that the lesson is the same, whether the calamity be wrought by man, or by one of those occurrences which we call accidents. In each case it is God's Hand which really strikes the blow, and by it He cries aloud to all men to repent. Siloam was a pool to the South-East of Jerusalem, close to the walls of the city, a tower of which may probably be that spoken of as having fallen and killed these eighteen persons (Siloam is mentioned in St. John ix. 7.).

5. "Likewise." If our Lord had in His mind the coming destruction of Jerusalem, the "likewise" here may refer to the downfall of the Temple and other buildings, in the ruin of which numbers perished. So shall the wicked perish in the ruin of the world itself.

6—9. The Barren Fig-tree.

6. "He spake also" &c. Plainly in close connection with the foregoing conversation, carrying on the warning, "Except ye repent, "ye shall all likewise perish."

"A certain man" &c. The owner of the vineyard is God; the vineyard His chosen people (Isai. v. 1.); and the fig-tree the individual

A.D. 29. had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none.

7 Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?

8 And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung *it:*

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sinner who is still in impenitence. It is not unusual in the East to find fig-trees planted among the vines in a vineyard. It seems as though a fig-tree, rather than one of the vines, is chosen, because it stands out distinct among the rest, and so the eye is, as it were, fixed upon it as a distinct object; and the mention of only *one* has the same purpose—namely to bring it home to each individual conscience as a clear distinct likeness of the sinner himself (So with "a man" in St. Matt. xxii. 11.).

"**He came and sought**" &c. God is continually seeking fruit on His trees. But He specially comes, when by His messengers, such as the prophets of old, but above all His own beloved Son, He visits His people and calls them to repentance.

7. "**The dresser of his vineyard.**" This is our blessed Saviour, to whom is given the government of the kingdom,—the care of God's vineyard.

"**These three years.**" Several explanations of the "three years" have been given, the best perhaps being that which supposes them to refer to the three years of our Lord's public ministry. But probably it is better not to press them into any special meaning, but to understand the words as implying simply, 'Again and again I come seeking fruit.'

"**Cut it down;**" &c. This is the decree of strict justice,—the doom which every barren tree deserves. Our Lord Himself taught this most strikingly in that which we may call His great *parable of action*—namely, the cursing of the barren fig-tree (See on St. Matt. xxi. 19.).

"**Cumbereth.**" That is, 'occupies uselessly'—'makes unfruitful and 'valueless.'

8. "**Lord, let it alone**" &c. The word "Lord" here would perhaps be better translated 'Sir,' or 'Master,' as being the speech of the "dresser of the vineyard" to the owner. It is easy to see in this "dresser of the vineyard" a picture of Him who "ever liveth to make "intercession for us", and in answer to whose pleadings many a sinner is spared for farther trial; for God is "long-suffering to us-ward, not "willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 St. Pet. iii. 9.).

"**Dig about it, and dung it.**" That is, give it every chance of bearing fruit. Spiritually this implies those special dealings and supplies of grace by which the sinner may be led to repentance. Perhaps our Lord had in view the still impenitent Jews, and those more manifest calls, and fuller outpourings of the Holy Spirit, which were to follow His Crucifixion and Ascension. But doubtless such renewed calls, and strivings of the Spirit, occur often in the lives of those who

9 and if it bear fruit, *well:* and if not, *then* after that thou shalt cut it down. A.D. 29.

10 ¶ And He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath. A.D. 30. 34th Year of our Lord's life.

11 And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up *herself*.

12 And when Jesus saw her, He called *her to Him*, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity.

13 [b] And He laid *His* hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God. [b] Mark 16. 18. Acts 9. 1.

14 And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the

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despise the riches of God's "forbearance and long-suffering, not knowing "that the goodness of God leadeth" them "to repentance" (Rom. ii. 4.).

9. "If it bear fruit, well." The word "well" is not in the original Greek. There is a pause after the word "fruit," but it could not be better filled up.

"If not," &c. The pleading is only for a longer trial. The "dresser "of the vineyard" does not ask that the barren tree may stand there for ever. There is a limit to the prayers of the Intercessor, and to the long-suffering of God.

The pains of the vine-dresser, together with the evident uncertainty of the result, may well illustrate the mystery of God's grace and man's free-will, so strikingly joined together by St. Paul in the words, "Work "out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which "worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure" (Phil. ii. 12, 13.).

10—17. The Healing of the woman with a spirit of infirmity on the Sabbath-day.

11. "A spirit of infirmity." It seems plain from our Lord's words to the ruler of the synagogue, in which He says the poor woman had been bound *by Satan* (16.), that the affliction here named was something more than mere natural infirmity, and was caused by the power of an evil spirit, though without that possession of the whole being which was so terrible in other cases.

12. "He called her to Him." Not waiting till she begged for help. It seems not unlikely that she, together with others, had come on purpose to meet our Lord, and hoping to obtain relief, for the ruler of the synagogue bids them "*come and be healed*" on some other day (14.).

13. "And He laid His hands on her." Probably at the same time that He spoke the words, "Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity." The act would be a mark of special kindness and favour.

14. "With indignation." Pretended, not real. This man was a

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14. "*Ruler of the synagogue.*" See on St. Mark v. 22.

A.D. 30. sabbath day, and said unto the people, [c] There are
[c] Exod. 20. 9. six days in which men ought to work: in them
[d] Matt. 12. 10. Mark 3. 2. ch. 6. 7. & 14. 3. therefore come and be healed, and [d] not on the sabbath day.

15 The Lord then answered him, and said, *Thou*
[e] ch. 14. 5. hypocrite, [e] doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or *his* ass from the stall, and lead *him* away to watering?

[f] ch. 19. 9. 16 And ought not this woman, [f] being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?

17 And when He had said these things, all His adversaries were ashamed: and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by Him.

18 ¶ Then said He, Unto what is the kingdom of God like? and whereunto shall I resemble it?

"hypocrite" (15.); and was really angry because Christ had done so wonderful a miracle, not because it was on the Sabbath-day.

15. "Doth not each one" &c. Our Lord uses a like argument on several occasions (See xiv. 5. St. Matt. xii. 11.), always to the effect that, if it were allowable to give help on the Sabbath to a beast, it must be far more so to a man. (For the use of the Sabbath see on St. Matt. xii. 8.)

16. "A daughter of Abraham." Not only of the human race, but still more of the chosen race of Abraham, which to the ruler of the synagogue, himself of the same race, would be a weighty addition to the argument.

"Loosed from this bond." Our Lord is still carrying on the comparison with the loosing of the ox or the ass. 'You,' He would say, 'spend time and labour in loosing a dumb beast to give it water after 'being tied up a few hours; I with a word and a touch loose one of 'God's chosen race from a bondage of eighteen years.'

This miracle may fitly suggest a spiritual application,—namely the lifting up by the power of Christ to new life and heavenly desires of those whose eyes and hearts have been long bowed down to earth by worldliness or covetousness or fleshly lusts.

18, 19. The Mustard Seed.

St. Matt. xiii. 31, 32. St. Mark iv. 30—34.

18. "Then said He." If, as many think, these two short parables were either repeated on this occasion, or spoken only on this occasion, being grouped with the others by St. Matthew for the purpose of instruction, they would very naturally foretell the growth and triumph of that kingdom which was already manifesting itself in the relief of misery and banishment of evil.

19 It is like a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and cast into his garden; and it grew, and waxed a great tree; and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it. A.D. 30.

20 ¶ And again He said, Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God?

21 It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

22 ¶ [g] And He went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem. [g] Matt. 9. 35. Mark 6. 6.

23 Then said one unto Him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And He said unto them,

24 Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for

20, 21. The Leaven.

St. Matt. xiii. 33.

22—30. The Strait Gate.

Compare St. Matt. vii. 13, 14, 22, 23.

22. "Journeying toward Jerusalem." This takes up again the mention of the last great missionary tour of our Lord (See on ix. 51. and x. 38.). There is no necessity to believe that all which St. Luke has related since he first mentioned our Lord's stedfast purpose of going up to Jerusalem took place during this journey. It is probable that the Evangelist has turned aside to relate other matters without regard to the actual time of their occurrence.

23. "Then said one." It is probable that this question was asked in consequence of what our Lord had already said on the subject in the Sermon on the Mount (St. Matt. vii. 14.). It had seemed a hard saying, and had been pondered by this man, who now desired to know more exactly our Lord's meaning, asking, as it were, 'Lord, dost Thou 'really mean to say that only few will be saved?' From our Lord's answer, which is rather severe than encouraging, we may gather that this man asked with something of a wrong spirit, possibly doubtingly, or curiously.

24. "Strive to enter in" &c. Our Lord does not answer the question put to Him. Indeed He tells less about the number saved than before, for then He had said of eternal life, "Few there be that find it." To have answered this man's question would only have satisfied curiosity. Christ does better. He turns the questioner's thoughts back upon himself. It is as though He said, 'I say not whether these be few or 'many: but this I say, strive to be among them.' The word translated "Strive" in this place implies a severe conflict and struggle,—'Strain 'every nerve.' Moreover it is in the plural number, so as to include other by-standers besides the one who asked the question.

"To enter in." That is, to life eternal.

"At the strait gate." The narrow entrance of repentance, and self-denial, and the taking up the cross to follow Christ.

A.D. 30. many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and
h See John 7. 34. & 8. 21. & 13. 33. shall not be able.

Rom. 9. 31. 25 When once the master of the house is risen
i Ps. 32. 6. Isai. 55. 6. up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to
k Matt. 25. 10. stand without, and to knock at the door, saying,
l ch. 6. 46. Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer
m Matt. 25. 12. and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are:

26 then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets.

n ver. 25. Matt. 25. 41. 27 But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not
o Ps. 6. 8. Matt. 25. 41. whence ye are; depart from me, all *ye* workers
p Matt. 8. 12. & 13. 42. & 24. 51. of iniquity.

q Matt. 8. 11. 28 There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and

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"Will seek to enter in," &c. Does not this seem to contradict the promise, "Seek, and ye shall find"? It would do so, if the seeking were the same in both cases. But here "seek" is opposed to "strive," and implies a weak or shallow desire: in the promise "seek" is used for the earnest hearty endeavour, which is always blest with success. Besides, we must not understand our Lord to mean, 'Many will seek 'to enter in *at the strait gate*, and shall not be able.' He means rather, 'Many will seek to enter in *by other ways*, and shall not be able'; or perhaps still better, 'Many will seek, *when too late*, to enter in', a meaning unfolded in the following verses. We have an instance of seeking and not finding in the Jews, who sought righteousness, "not by faith, "but as it were by the works of the law" (Rom. ix. 32.).

25. "When once" &c. The gate has been "strait" before: it is now *shut*. This describes the end of time, and the final closing of the door of salvation. If it will then be shut, it is certainly open now, and all who "strive" may enter in. We are reminded here of the vain appeal of the foolish virgins (St. Matt. xxv. 10—12.).

26. "Then shall ye begin" &c. It becomes plain now that our Lord is speaking chiefly of the rejection of the Jews. They were such as sought to enter in, but could not. Christ describes them as seeking an entrance on the ground of their outward knowledge of Him. They were familiar with both His person and His teaching, and on this they relied for acceptance. How many are like them, and think they shall be saved because they have been very near to Christ, hearers of His word, perhaps eating and drinking of His Sacrament, while they have never really entered in at the strait gate, or walked in the narrow way? This passage is again a repetition from the Sermon on the Mount.

28. "When ye shall see" &c. This word "see" must be understood in the same sense as that in which the rich man "in hell... "seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom" (xvi. 23.), not of bodily, but of mental sight; so that it almost means the same as 'know'.

Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, A.D. 30.
and you *yourselves* thrust out.

29 And they shall come from the east, and *from* the west, and from the north, and *from* the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.

30 [r] And, behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last. [r] Matt. 19. 30. & 20. 16. Mark 10. 31.

31 ¶ The same day there came certain of the

"In the kingdom of God." That is, the perfected and glorified kingdom (See on St. Matt. xiii. 43.). The Jews presumed upon their being children of Abraham to count themselves sure of God's favour and salvation. It would then be peculiarly terrible to them to think of being shut out from the eternal kingdom to which Abraham and the other patriarchs and prophets were admitted. And still lower would be their fall, when, as our Lord goes on to say, the Gentiles, whom they despised so greatly, should be gathered in.

29. "They shall come" &c. A blessed promise of the salvation of the Gentiles. Our Lord had said on another occasion, "*Many* shall "come" (St. Matt. viii. 11.). He does not here repeat the "many", for He does not desire to answer the question put to Him, except by awakening the conscience of the questioner. Yet in themselves the redeemed and saved will be "many", for they will be "a great multi-"tude, which no man could number" (Rev. vii. 9.).

"Sit down." The blessedness of heaven is here, as in so many other places, described under the figure of a feast. In itself it is such as neither human words nor human thoughts can picture. It can only be spoken of in a dim shadow.

30. "There are last" &c. These "last" are the Gentiles spoken of in the verse before. The "first," who will be last, are the Jews, first in calling and privilege, who will be "thrust out" of the kingdom of God. The words however may also have a wider meaning, and teach us that many highly gifted and blest may in the great Day be far behind others held of little account (See on St. Matt. xx. 16.).

31—33. Warning concerning Herod, and our Lord's answer.

31. "The same day." That is, on which the conversation just related took place.

"There came" &c. It seems probable that Herod had actually sent the Pharisees with this order to our Lord to depart out of his province, (they themselves adding the words concerning Herod's murderous designs,) else we can hardly account for our Lord's returning the message which follows. The Herod here mentioned is Herod Antipas, "tetrarch of Galilee" (iii. 1. and see also on St. Matt. xiv. 1.); and the words of the Pharisees would imply that our Lord was still either in Galilee itself, or (which seems more likely) in Peræa, the part beyond the Jordan (See on St. Matt. xix. 1.), which also belonged to Herod Antipas. The craftiness imputed to Herod in our Lord's answer leads us to imagine that he had some secret motive for bidding Him

A.D. 30. Pharisees, saying unto Him, Get Thee out, and depart hence: for Herod will kill Thee.

32 And He said unto them, Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to
[a] Heb. 2. 10. day and to morrow, and the third *day* [a] I shall be perfected.

33 Nevertheless I must walk to day, and to morrow, and the *day* following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.

34 ¶ O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the

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depart. Probably he had no real thought of killing Christ, as he had St. John the Baptist, for when He was sent to him by Pilate, he does not appear to have had any such wish (See xxiii. 7—11.). It seems as though he wanted simply to frighten Him, and so to induce Him to leave his province, in which He was becoming too popular, and attracting too many followers to please the unbelieving ruler.

32. "Go ye, and tell that fox." It is very difficult to judge of the exact force of expressions used in another age and country, and this expression may not have sounded so harsh when uttered as it does to us. Still it is doubtless meant as a rebuke—'Go and tell that crafty man—'that hypocrite.'

"Behold, I cast out devils," &c. 'I am engaged in My works of 'mercy and blessing.'

"To day and to morrow," &c. These words do not signify so many literal days, but are used as a kind of proverb, meaning for a little space longer. Our Lord's message signifies that He must follow His course of mercy for the appointed time, and then, "when His hour was "come, He would lay down His life, and crown all His labours and "sufferings by death. But it would be His own free act. Herod "would not either delay or hasten it" (*P. Young.*).

33. "Nevertheless I must walk" &c. The word "walk" in the original is the same as "depart" (31.)—literally 'journey' or 'travel,'—so that our Lord takes up the Pharisees' word, and says, 'Yet still I 'am about to obey your king's command, for I must journey on, day 'after day, leaving his province, as he bids Me, and going towards 'Jerusalem.' Christ implies that though He is about thus to depart, it is not on account of Herod's order, but in obedience to a higher bidding. "I must," because I am doing My Father's will, and passing on to My appointed Sacrifice.

"It cannot be" &c. Christ does not mean that no prophet ever perished out of Jerusalem, for many did, and the last of all—St. John the Baptist himself—did so; but that, since no place was more noted for the martyrdom of the prophets of old, so it could not be but that He—the greatest of prophets—should perish there also.

34, 35. Lamentation over Jerusalem.

Compare St. Matt. xxiii. 1, *Note*, and 37—39.

This lamentation is given by St. Matthew at the close of our Lord's last address in the Temple, on the Tuesday before His Crucifixion,

prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen *doth gather* her brood under *her* wings, and ye would not! A.D. 30.

35 Behold, [t] your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see Me, until *the time* come when ye shall say, [u] Blessed *is* He that cometh in the name of the Lord.

[t] Lev. 26. 31, 32. Ps. 69. 25. Isai. 1. 7. Dan. 9. 27. Mic. 3. 12.
[u] Ps. 118. 26. Matt. 21. 9. Mark 11. 9. ch. 19. 38. John 12. 13.

CHAPTER XIV.

2 *Christ healeth the dropsy on the sabbath:* 7 *teacheth humility:* 12 *to feast the poor:* 15 *under the parable of the great supper, sheweth how worldly minded men, who contemn the word of God, shall be shut out of heaven.* 25 *Those who will be His disciples, to bear their cross must make their accounts aforehand, lest with shame they revolt from Him afterward,* 34 *and become altogether unprofitable, like salt that hath lost his savour.*

AND it came to pass, as He went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the sabbath day, that they watched Him.

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and many have supposed that St. Luke has introduced the words here, though they were really spoken on the later occasion only. It seems however just one of those sayings that might most naturally have been uttered on more than one occasion, and it falls in here perfectly with our Lord's mention of His own Death at Jerusalem. So that it is better to suppose it spoken on both occasions.

34. **"As a hen" &c.** No figure could more touchingly picture to us our Lord's tender yearning for the people who despised and rejected Him. It is the same for each one of us even now. And yet how many are there, "whom He would fain cherish under His fostering wings, "and preserve from the assaults of their great spiritual enemy," over whom He has to repeat His bitter lamentation, because they will not! "How often would I"—are His sorrowful words. Shall it be always in vain?

35. **"Your house."** When our Lord spoke these words on leaving the Temple there could be no doubt as to their referring to the Temple; and therefore they probably refer to it also here.

CHAPTER XIV.

1—6. Healing of the Man with the dropsy on the Sabbath.

1. **"To eat bread on the sabbath day."** The Jews did not scruple to give entertainments on the Sabbath, and these must have given occasion for more than necessary labour. This makes the finding fault with our Lord's Sabbath healings all the more wicked and hypocritical. We may observe that our Lord is never recorded to have refused an invitation made to Him, thus showing His readiness to carry His blessings to all who might be ready to receive them. He was equally willing to sit at the table of Publicans and of Pharisees.

A. D. 30. 2 And, behold, there was a certain man before Him which had the dropsy.

3 And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers
[a] Matt. 12. 10. and Pharisees, saying, [a] Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day?

4 And they held their peace. And He took *him*, and healed him, and let him go;

[b] Ex. 23. 5. Deut. 22. 4. ch. 13. 15. 5 and answered them, saying, [b] Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day?

6 And they could not answer Him again to these things.

7 ¶ And He put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when He marked how they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them,

8 When thou art bidden of any *man* to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him;

9 and he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room.

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3. "Answering." Either to some objections made but not recorded, or perhaps only to the thoughts of those present.

5. "Which of you" &c. The same argument, though not quite in the same form, was made use of by our Lord in respect of the healing of the woman with the spirit of infirmity (See on xiii. 15.), and of the man with the withered hand (St. Matt. xii. 11.).

7—11. The choosing of the lowest place.

7. "A parable." What follows is called a parable, because, while it may be taken literally in its simple sense, it has also a wider and deeper meaning.

"When He marked" &c. It is probable that on this occasion there were many distinguished Pharisees present, and these gave plain proof of their besetting pride by the way in which they chose out for themselves the places of chief honour. "Room" in this whole passage simply means 'place.'

8. "When thou art bidden" &c. This "parable" appears to be founded on a like saying in the Book of Proverbs:—"Put not forth "thyself in the presence of the king, and stand not in the place of "great men: for better it is that it be said unto thee, Come up hither; "than that thou shouldest be put lower in the presence of the prince "whom thine eyes have seen" (Prov. xxv. 6, 7.).

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5. "*An ass.*" Most of the oldest copies have 'son' here instead of "ass," and it is probably the true reading. Our Lord would then say, "Which of you would "have a child, or even an ox, fallen into "a pit" &c.

10 [c] But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee. A.D. 30. [c] Prov. 25. 6, 7.

11 [d] For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. [d] Job 22. 29. Ps. 18. 27. Prov. 29. 23. Matt. 23. 12. ch. 18. 14. James 4. 6. 1 Pet. 5. 5.

12 ¶ Then said He also to him that bade Him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor *thy* rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee.

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10. "Friend, go up higher." So does Christ ever speak to the humble. He calls them 'Friends,' since they are like Himself, who is "meek and lowly in heart." And He bids them "go up higher"—higher here, in spiritual gifts and graces: higher hereafter, even so as to sit upon His throne of glory. And we may apply the parable to the feast to which we are bidden in the Holy Communion of the Body and Blood of the Lord. It is always he who in spirit takes the lowest place, feeling most deeply his own unworthiness, whom his Lord raises to the chief place in joy and peace and strength.

"Worship." That is, honour.

11. "Whosoever exalteth himself" &c. This is a favourite saying of our Lord (See xviii. 14. and St. Matt. xxiii. 12.). It is plain that His language as to the taking of places at a wedding-feast was but to teach this great general truth. The taking of the places was but a little matter, and one in which, although pride might easily show itself, yet worldly prudence and good taste would guide a man aright. So it was something like a parable to teach a lesson of general humility. It is very necessary to observe that to humble oneself *for the purpose* of being exalted is no humility at all, and that our Lord does not set the hope of the "Go up higher" before us as a *motive* for taking the lower place. It must be from a genuine and simple-minded lowliness, or it is hypocrisy. "The road to the honours of heaven passes "at all times through the gate of humility. But let us remember that "the promise '*he shall be exalted*' is made to one who '*humbleth himself*' "and is lowly in his own estimation, not to him who by his speech, "his look, his clothing, or by any other mere outward manifestations, "endeavours to appear lowly in the sight of his fellow-men, but only "to him who is really so in his inmost heart" (*Denton.*).

12—14. Who are our best guests.

12. "Him that bade Him." In whom, we can hardly doubt, our Lord saw much of that selfish and worldly motive in his entertainment which He here condemns.

"Call not." No one would imagine this to forbid the invitation of equals and "rich neighbours." Our Lord is simply showing a *better* way of entertaining, namely by feeding the poor. What He would

A.D. 30. 13 But when thou makest a feast, call [e] the poor,
[e] Neh. 8. 10, 12. the maimed, the lame, the blind:
14 and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.

15 ¶ And when one of them that sat at meat with
[f] Rev. 19. 9. Him heard these things, he said unto Him, [f] Blessed *is* he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.
[g] Matt. 22. 2. 16 [g] Then said He unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many:

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teach is, 'If thou wouldest be *blessed* in thy entertaining, do not seek 'to entertain those who will do the same by thee, making thee a 'recompence; but share thy good things with those who need, and 'then God will recompense thee.'

14. "The resurrection of the just." That is, that blessed resurrection to eternal life of which the just alone shall be partakers—"the "resurrection of life" (St. John v. 29.). There is another resurrection —that of the unjust—which is "to shame and everlasting contempt" (Dan. xii. 2.)—"the resurrection of damnation" (St. John v. 29.).

15—24. Parable of the Great Supper.

15. "Blessed is he" &c. This exclamation was called forth by the mention of the recompence at the Resurrection of the just, and meant, 'Blessed is he who shall win that recompence.' Probably the speaker was not thinking much of the *way* to win it, but, as being one of God's chosen people, was flattering himself that he should doubtless be a sharer in the Resurrection spoken of. The blessedness of the future kingdom was of old pictured under the image of a feast (See Is. xxv. 6.), and the Jews seem to have had very earthly and carnal ideas on the subject, and to have looked forward to an actual feast, such as this man speaks of.

16. "A certain man made a great supper." We may observe that our Lord does not begin this parable by saying, 'The kingdom of 'heaven is like,' as He does so many. He is speaking in the midst of a company of men who rejected that kingdom of heaven, and disbelieved in it. Therefore He tells them about it indeed, but without arousing their suspicions by the name, taking His parable from the scene before Him, and beginning it without preface, "A certain man "made a great supper." God is the maker of this feast. It is "great" —in its company, for no man can number them:—in its blessedness, for no man can conceive this:—in its duration, for it will last for ever. Perhaps in the feast being called "supper"—the great evening meal—may be signified the fact that the bliss thus pictured is after the toils and troubles of life's brief day are over.

"Bade many." Namely, first of all, the Jewish nation, who were

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15—24. **The Great Supper.** Quite a different parable from that of the Marriage of the King's Son, though some points in the two resemble each other (See *Note* on St. Matt. xxii. 1.).

17 and [h] sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready. A.D. 30. [h] Prov. 9. 2, 5.

18 And they all with one *consent* began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused.

19 And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused.

20 And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.

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bidden by the Law and the Prophets to the feast of the Gospel. But from what follows (See on 21.) we gather that our Lord had in view chiefly those to whom the Law and the Prophets spoke most loudly, namely the learned classes and the teachers of the people,—"the priests "and the elders, the scribes and the Pharisees, in opposition to the "publicans and sinners, and all the despised portions of the people" (*Abp. Trench.*).

17. **"Sent his servant at supper time" &c.** This appears to have been a customary observance on the part of great men in the East. Spiritually, "his servant" represents our blessed Lord, who "took "upon Him the form of a servant" (Phil. ii. 7.); and "supper time" signifies that "fulness of time" when the blessings of the Gospel were ready for all who would accept them.

18. **"With one consent."** Not as having really agreed together, but as if they had agreed together. Observe, the excuses which follow are not those of hardened wickedness or obstinate unbelief; but rather spring from a careless unconcern. They exactly picture to us what our Lord meant in the parable of the Marriage of the King's Son, when He said those invited "made light of" the invitation (St. Matt. xxii. 5.).

"I have bought a piece of ground," &c. There is nothing in itself sinful ascribed to any of these men. Their sin is allowing *lawful* things to occupy the first place in their hearts,—in short their putting earth before heaven. This first man is ensnared by the pride of earthly possession. It is a joy to him to look upon his broad acres, and to think, 'All this is mine'; and he cannot forego this joy for the joys of the "great supper." Yet he speaks respectfully: he does not give up all thought of heaven. Doubtless he hopes for another invitation, when he may be more disposed to go.

19. **"I have bought five yoke of oxen."** This man is "getting "what the other has already got" (*Abp. Trench.*). He is occupied not with the contemplation of his possessions, but with the cares and anxieties of his calling. He has to make his living, and must give his time and his thoughts to it. He is described as a farmer, who is taken up with the business of his farm. He has no leisure for the "great supper."

20. **"I have married a wife."** This man is hindered by family ties. He must think of those of his own household. This he considers quite a sufficient excuse, so that he does not, like the other two, pray

A.D. 30. 21 So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind.

22 And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room.

23 And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel *them* to come in, that my house may be filled.

[i] Matt. 21. 43. & 22. 8. Acts 13. 46. 24 For I say unto you, [i] That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of My supper.

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to be excused, but says bluntly, "I cannot come." Even the most innocent relationships may keep us from God. Archbishop Trench points out how remarkably the very next words of our Lord recorded by St. Luke after this parable accord with it in condemning this third excuse:—"If any man come to Me, and hate not his father, and "mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and "his own life also, he cannot be My disciple" (26.).

21. "Go out quickly into the streets and lanes" &c. The scribes and Pharisees having all refused the invitation and made excuse, Christ calls the ignorant and outcasts, the "publicans and sinners." We can hardly doubt that our Lord is here reminding His host of the precept He had already given him, "Call the poor, the maimed, the "lame, the blind" (13), as though showing him in passing that, in God's dealing with His people, such are the guests He freely invites, —the spiritually poor and blind and needy. And we know that they obeyed the call which the others "made light of."

23. "Go out into the highways and hedges." This is a prophecy of the call of the Gentiles: for, as the "city" represents the Jewish nation, so the "highways and hedges" represent the Gentiles scattered in distant and unknown lands. This command to go to the Gentiles is, according to the strict interpretation of the parable, given by God the Father to His Son our Lord (See on 17.), who, as we know, did not Himself bear His message of mercy to the Gentiles, being sent only to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (St. Matt. xv. 24.). But this is no difficulty, for what Christ does by His ministers, He does Himself, and they were sent by Him to the Gentiles.

"Compel them to come in." Plainly not by outward force, but by all the powers of earnest persuasion.

24. "For I say unto you." This verse is generally taken as part of that which the Maker of the great supper spoke to his servant, and so as the conclusion of the parable. But it is found in the Greek that the word "you" is here in the plural, as spoken to many, whereas in the whole parable only one servant is addressed. Thus it seems probable that this verse is really no part of the parable, but a sort of application of it spoken to the assembled guests at table, though still carrying on the language of the parable. "*My* supper" would thus

25 ¶ And there went great multitudes with Him: A.D. 30.
and He turned, and said unto them,

26 [k] If any *man* come to Me, [l] and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, [m] yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.

[k] Deut. 13. 6. & 33. 9. Matt. 10. 37. [l] Rom. 9. 13. [m] Rev. 12. 11.

27 And [n] whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after Me, cannot be My disciple.

[n] Matt. 16. 24. Mark 8. 34. ch. 9. 23. 2 Tim. 3. 12.

28 For [o] which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have *sufficient* to finish *it?*

[o] Prov. 24. 27.

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be a startling word to them. Jesus is suddenly transformed into the Giver of the feast, and speaks with a strange authority, "I say unto "you, that none of those men which were bidden" (and His hearers must surely have known the picture of themselves) "shall taste of "*My* supper"—"*My* supper, to which I not only invite you, but which "I, as the Son, with the Father, have Myself prepared for you" (*Stier.*).

25—35. Counting the cost.

25. "Great multitudes." Whether this was immediately after the feast in the chief Pharisee's house, or at some other time, we have no means of knowing. It would seem however that our Lord, who in the scribes and Pharisees had seen a fatal backwardness in receiving the Gospel invitation, now saw in the thronging multitudes a dangerous forwardness to profess themselves His disciples before they knew how much they would have to give up to be really so.

26. "Hate." This is a strong word, and of course does not imply the *feeling* of hatred, but a readiness to *act* as if one hated. The nearest and dearest must be forsaken, and opposed, and offended, if need be, in order to follow Christ (See on St. Matt. x. 37.).

"Yea, and his own life also." This shows clearly the meaning of the "hate." If the love of life, which is natural to all, stands in the way of the love of Christ, we must be ready to cast life itself aside, and to count it and all belonging to it but loss that we may win Christ (See Phil. iii. 7, 8.).

27. "Whosoever doth not bear his cross." This must have been a hard saying to the eager multitude. It was hard when said to Apostles, who could better count the cost (See on St. Matt. x. 38.). To the ignorant people it must have been chilling and discouraging. But Christ would not allow them to cherish false hopes. He speaks hard words that all may know well that He had no earthly reward to bestow, but that they "must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom "of God" (Acts xiv. 22.).

28. "Which of you," &c. Our Lord sets forth the necessity of counting the cost before undertaking to be His disciple in two short parables, both of which represent the folly of beginning any great and costly work without having calculated whether we shall be able to complete it. The first is taken from the building of a tower. The Christian would build a tower, laying Christ as his foundation, and

A.D. 30. 29 Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish *it*, all that behold *it* begin to mock him,

30 saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish.

31 Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?

32 Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace.

33 So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be My disciple.

p Matt. 5. 13. Mark 9. 50. 34 p Salt *is* good: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned?

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building thereon the "gold, silver, precious stones" of faith and holiness (See 1 Cor. iii. 11—13.), adding grace to grace, and knowledge to knowledge, till his tower reaches unto heaven. But if he only lay the foundation, and then for lack of courage and endurance forsake the work, he is justly mocked for his folly.

31. "Or what king," &c. Any man undertaking to follow Christ without having weighed the difficulties and dangers he will have to undergo, is like a king going out to battle against another far more powerful, without having bethought him how his weak forces can withstand the strength of the enemy. He is sure to be worsted and put to shame. Had he known his own weakness and the enemy's strength in time, he would have shrunk from the unequal encounter, and yielded, seeking terms of peace. So, Jesus would say, do ye, who are eager to cast in your lot with Me, reckon whether ye have strength to endure the battle that is before you, and, if not, do not rashly engage in it. The king "with ten thousand" is a man not without some strength and resources, but weak for the encounter before him. The king "with twenty thousand" is the great and difficult work which has to be met and conquered by the Christian. The sending an 'ambassage' (or 'embassy') to desire peace is the shrinking from undertaking what he feels he is not strong enough to carry out.

33. "So likewise," &c. The cost of being Christ's disciple is the forsaking of all that he hath. If any one, reckoning with himself, finds he cannot make this sacrifice, he had better not begin the work. He has not sufficient to finish his tower: his force is not strong enough for the battle.

34. "Salt is good:" &c. This figure is used of the Christian man in the Sermon on the Mount (See on St. Matt. v. 13.). Here it is used of something *in* the Christian man. As it appears to belong to the foregoing conversation, we must understand it of that spirit of self-sacrifice, which is declared to be so needful in Christ's disciples (See on St. Mark ix. 50.). Our Lord is therefore declaring how savourless

35 It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; *but* men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. A.D. 30.

CHAPTER XV.

1 *The parable of the lost sheep:* 8 *of the piece of silver:* 11 *of the prodigal son.*

THEN [a] drew near unto Him all the publicans and sinners for to hear Him. [a] Matt. 9. 10.

2 And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, say-

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and good-for-nothing a man becomes whose first zeal and self-sacrifice have died away. If he begins well, but soon falls away, his salt has lost its savour, and such salt is good neither for putting on the land, nor for mixing with manure. Moreover this good zeal once allowed to die away is not easily revived: "wherewith shall it" (that is, the tasteless salt itself) "be seasoned?" The saying is here a vivid warning of the peril of so hastily or lightly beginning as shortly to fall away. He that will cast in his lot with Christ must do so with a thorough knowledge of the work he undertakes, and such reliance on Divine strength as alone can enable him to endure unto the end.

35. "He that hath ears" &c. A solemn appeal for thoughtful attention to words of deep importance (See on St. Matt. xi. 15.).

CHAPTER XV.

The Three Parables showing God's mercy to sinners.

1, 2. Introduction.

The three parables of the Lost Sheep, the Lost Piece of money, and the Prodigal Son, must be considered together, as one great lesson, setting forth the same great truth from different sides. The great truth is God's mercy in saving the lost. This is set forth in the first two parables—those of the Lost Sheep and the Lost Piece of money—from the side of God's sovereign grace; in the last—that of the Prodigal Son—it is set forth from the side of man's free will. In the former God seeks the lost; in the latter the lost seeks God. In the former God's work alone is displayed; in the latter man's. And yet it is really all one: for we may say on the one hand that the wandering sheep is not brought home against its own will, and on the other hand that the Prodigal would never have arisen and returned, had not God's grace sought him out, and given him first the will, and then the power, to do so.

1. "All the publicans and sinners." These, the lowest and most despised among the people—the taxgatherers for the Romans (See on St. Matt. v. 46.), and the outcasts and openly wicked (See on vii. 37.), —were naturally drawn towards One, who did not scorn and repel them as the Pharisees would, but who received them and treated them with kindly tenderness, thereby leading them to better things.

2. "Murmured." As once before, (v. 30.). And blessed to sinners were those murmurs, drawing forth as they did on each occasion such priceless words of hope and comfort.

A.D. 30. ing, This Man receiveth sinners, [b] and eateth with
[b] Acts 11. 3. Gal. 2. 12. them.

3 ¶ And He spake this parable unto them, saying,
[c] Matt. 18. 12. 4 [c] What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?

5 And when he hath found *it*, he layeth *it* on his shoulders, rejoicing.

6 And when he cometh home, he calleth together *his* friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep [d] which
[d] 1 Pet. 2. 19, 25. was lost.

7 I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in

3—7. The Lost Sheep.

4. "What man" &c. Who is represented by the "man" here,—the owner of the hundred sheep? Doubtless the Son of God Himself—the "Good Shepherd" (St. John x. 11.). When those who should have been the shepherds of God's people let them wander and perish without searching or seeking after them, then He came seeking and saving that which was lost. (The whole of Ezek. xxxiv. should be read in connection with this parable.) The "hundred sheep" mean all mankind, or rather perhaps any group out of mankind, containing both "just persons" (7.) and lost sinners. The "one of them" is singled out to show God's care for each individual sinner, of however little value he may seem to be, as well as to bring the parable home to each separate conscience (See on "a man" St. Matt. xxii. 11.). By the "wilderness" we are not to understand a barren and desolate place, but the ordinary pasturage of flocks—the green hollows and valleys among the rocks and hills.

"Until he find it." The "Good Shepherd" spares Himself no labour or suffering in recovering the lost sheep. Nay, He "giveth "His life for the sheep." Has He done so much to find us, and shall we refuse to be found by Him?

5. "He layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing." There is no smiting of the wanderer, no harshness, no anger;—only the tenderest love. Who can fail to remember the prophet's wondrously beautiful picture of the Good Shepherd, "He shall feed His flock like a shepherd, He "shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, "and shall gently lead those that are with young" (Is. xl. 11.).

6. "When he cometh home," &c. The bringing of the lost sheep home is not to be understood only of the future bringing of the lost sinner to heaven. It signifies the present bringing of him back to safety by repentance. It is this which causes the joy. The "friends "and neighbours" signify the "angels of God" (10.).

3—7. **The Lost Sheep.** Our Lord uses the same figure to show the value of each little one of the flock in the Good Shepherd's eyes (St. Matt. xviii. 12—14.).

heaven over one sinner that repenteth, [e] more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance. A.D. 30.

[e] ch. 5. 32.

8 ¶ Either what woman having ten [2] pieces of

[2] *Drachma*, here translated *a piece of silver*, is the eighth part of an ounce, which cometh to seven pence halfpenny, and is equal to the Roman penny, Matt. 18. 28.

7. "Ninety and nine just persons," &c. That is, if they all were such. Our Lord is not drawing any sort of comparison here between the *numbers* on each side. Moreover in speaking of "just persons, which "need no repentance," He seems to be referring to the "Pharisees "and scribes" (2.), and therefore to use the expression, as He does "they that are whole" (St. Matt. ix. 12.), in a sort of gentle irony (See on St. Mark vii. 9.). It is as though He said, there is more joy over one repenting sinner than over "ninety and nine just persons, "who need no repentance," such as you Pharisees and scribes believe yourselves to be.

8—10. The Lost Piece of silver.

8. "What woman." Again, under this second figure, does our Lord set forth His anxious search for the lost, and the joy of the finding. The truths taught in this parable are the same as those taught in the last. A wise teacher often enforces the same lesson by several different examples or illustrations. So our Lord enforces the lesson of perseverance in prayer by the two short parables of the Friend at midnight (xi. 5—8.) and of the Unjust Judge (xviii. 1—8.). It has been often said that the "woman" here signifies the Church of Christ acting as her Lord's handmaid in the search for lost souls. But, in the first place, the points of the parable are the diligence in seeking and the joy in finding, and not the person of the seeker (—the parable would have had the same force if it had been 'What merchant', or 'What money-changer', instead of "What woman"—); and, in the second place, the *form* of the parable makes such an interpretation very unnatural. The fact is, this and the foregoing are scarcely true parables, in which a story, plainly invented for the purpose, like that of the Prodigal Son, has the spiritual history running (more or less closely) side by side all through with the framework of the story. They are rather illustrations, in the form of questions appealing to the daily life of the hearers, and resemble the question, "Which "of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not "straightway pull him out on the sabbath day?" (xiv. 5.). Had our Lord cast His parable into the more studied form, and said, 'The 'kingdom of heaven is like unto a woman' &c., then plainly we should more naturally have looked for a spiritual truth hidden under the sex of the person named. Any point in a true parable (unless simply necessary to make the story natural) may be supposed to be put in for a special purpose, since the whole is invented. But this is not the case in a question appealing to real life, which is asked with a view to some special point or points, and not with a view to a complete picture of the subject.

"Ten pieces of silver." The lost sinner is compared to a lost coin, and we may well reflect on the fitness of this comparison. For

A.D. 30. silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find *it*?

9 And when she hath found *it*, she calleth *her* friends and *her* neighbours together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost.

10 Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.

11 ¶ And He said, A certain man had two sons:
12 and the younger of them said to *his* father,

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each human soul bears on it (however marred and defaced) the image and superscription of the Creator (See on St. Matt. xxii. 21.). Though lost, it still belongs to Him.

"Light a candle." This has been pressed into referring to the holy Scriptures, as an instrument for the finding of the lost sinner; but it is much better to understand it simply as describing the care and pains of the seeker.

11—32. The Prodigal Son.

If it were allowable to make distinctions as to divine sayings, "we "might term this parable the crown and pearl of all our Lord's para- "bles" (*Stier.*). It is indeed "a Gospel within a Gospel" (*Lange.*).

11. "A certain man had two sons." The father in the parable is God. The two sons are the two classes before our Lord,—the self-righteous Pharisees, and the publicans and sinners, whose reception by Him aroused their murmurings. Some (probably because several of our Lord's parables do concern this point) have understood by the two sons the Jews and Gentiles; but if, as we cannot doubt, this parable was spoken on the same occasion with the last two, and in answer to the murmurings of the Scribes and Pharisees, it is plain that the former must be the true interpretation.

As with the sheep, and the coins, so now with the sons, we must not fail to notice the first leading thought of ownership and possession. The lost sheep belongs to the man who seeks for it; the lost coin belongs to the woman; the prodigal son belongs to the father. He is a *son;* a member of the family; not a stranger. Christ does not picture the one son as born in a happy home, and the other as belonging to a different family, and having at length to be taught the happiness of the good Father's house, and to seek admission to it. He is *already in it*. He goes away *from it*. Thus the picture Christ draws is of the fall of a baptized Christian,—of one who from the first is called—and treated as—a *son*. Our Lord thus confirms the truth that the Christian's attitude in this life is not so much that of one fighting to gain a promised prize, as that of one fighting to defend a treasure already bestowed upon him. It is not *that he may win*, but *lest he lose*, his adoption as a child of God, that He must watch and pray. The Prodigal very nearly lost this privilege for ever.

Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth *to me.* And he divided unto them [f] *his* living. A.D. 30.

[f] Mark 12. 44.

13 And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.

14 And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want.

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12. "Father, give me the portion of goods" &c. This request shows that his heart was already weary of his home, and that he was longing to be free from his father's control. He was not content with the daily blessings and happiness of his father's house. He desired a separate portion, the means of enjoying himself apart from his father. And his request was granted. God has made man's will free, and when we choose to depart, He forces us not to stay. Probably we should not press the "goods" and the "living" into meaning any special gifts, bodily or spiritual; though it is true that, when we wilfully leave our heavenly Father, He does not send us away quite empty, but lets us go with those bodily blessings, and mental endowments, and worldly goods, in which we choose to seek our happiness.

13. "Gathered all together," &c. Thus carrying out in open act the secret purpose of his heart.

"A far country." The far country is forgetfulness of God—that state in which it is said of a man, "neither is God in all his thoughts" (Ps. x. 4.). Or we may say it is this world, which in its evil is far from God.

"Wasted his substance." The "substance" here, as the "goods" and "living" above (12.), means all the blessings God suffers us to retain when we go from Him. For by sinful conduct all mental gifts and powers, all noble impulses, all kindly affections, are no less surely wasted than is money itself. It is so difficult in this parable to separate the story from its spiritual meaning that we are apt to forget that "riotous living" of the Prodigal is not to be limited in the interpretation to any one form of vice, but signifies far more widely any life in which pleasure is sought apart from God.

14. "When he had spent all." At first no doubt he found a certain pleasure in his new life. It is simple folly to deny the pleasures of sin. But the bottom of these pleasures is soon reached. This Prodigal learnt ere long their emptiness and worthlessness. They could never satisfy.

"A mighty famine in that land." A mighty spiritual famine,—a lack of all that can feed and satisfy the soul. It is well pointed out by Stier that in reality that mighty famine is always in that land, though it is only felt by those dwelling there as they one by one begin to realize their true state, and come to themselves. Still, when Christ says this famine "*arose*", He may be thinking of those visitations (such as sicknesses, poverty, bereavements,) whereby the merciful Father often opens the eyes of His prodigal sons to their true condition. It may be that this famine is one way in which the Shepherd is seeking to bring back the lost sheep.

A.D. 30. 15 And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

16 And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.

17 And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!

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15. "He went and joined himself" &c. Thus he falls deeper and deeper. Disappointment turns to recklessness. What so common as to see one who has been for a time a mere pleasure-seeker end in being a degraded slave to the lowest vices? The "citizen of that country"—by which we understand one who belonged to it, who was at home there, (not a stranger, who should never have been there, like the Prodigal)—is surely the prince of this world—the devil. The reckless sinner hires himself to serve the devil. He has tried to enjoy himself without giving up all self-respect and self-government, but it has failed, and he now plunges into any filth of sin, without caring what it is, in the faint hope of getting some pleasure in return. He serves Satan for any wages he will give him. And this master, with whom he has been friends for some time, but to whom he now is forced to join himself as a slave to do his bidding, sets him to the feeding of swine—to the lowest and foulest of work, the serving of "divers lusts and pleasures" (Tit. iii. 3.).

16. "He would fain have filled" &c. That is, he has become so low and degraded that he would gladly take his pleasure, and satisfy his desires, if he could, in any foul way.

"No man gave unto him." His old boon-companions, his hard-hearted master, his fellow-slaves,—all were alike, none cared for him, none pitied his sufferings. Besides, they could not help him, if they would. They had no real food to offer wherewith to nourish his starving soul. The wicked know not how to comfort the wicked. Behold how Satan treats his servants! He promises high wages. See what he gives! Yet even in this last extremity (thanks be to God!) there is hope. When God suffered the new kingdom of Judah to fall under the power of the king of Egypt, He said of His people, "They shall be *his* servants, that they may know *My* service" (2 Chron. xii. 8.). So through being Satan's servant this Prodigal came to know God's service.

17. "When he came to himself." All this time he had been as one beside himself. This is the first step in the recovery. He goes into his own heart. He sees what, and where, and in what condition, he really is. This is the sense of sin, the first honest gaze into the foulness of the polluted heart.

"How many hired servants" &c. He does not think of his elder brother, and all the privileges he is enjoying in his father's house, but rather of those who have but a small share of those privileges—the "hired servants." He would be glad to be but as one of them. These "hired servants" would mean such as serve God even imperfectly—such as "do His work rather in the spirit of servants than of

18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say A.D. 30.
unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven,
and before thee,
19 and am no more worthy to be called thy son:
make me as one of thy hired servants.
20 And he arose, and came to his father. But

"sons, rather looking to their hire than out of the free impulse of love, "who yet are not without their reward" (*Trench.*). Even these have abundance of those very privileges and blessings, which the Prodigal has thrown away. Alas! how many, when brought to feel and acknowledge this, lack the strength and courage to arise, and only plunge deeper into sin to drown the disturbing voice of conscience!

18. "I will arise." Let us not suppose that the Prodigal can do this in his own strength. No; just as the shepherd sought the sheep, and the woman the piece of money, so doubtless we may say that the Father seeks the Prodigal in his misery, and by His good Spirit inspires the resolve.

"Father." Blessed word for fallen sinners! They may arise and go—not to an angry God—not to a stern Master—but to a Father, and a Father who loves them still. It was not their dutiful obedience which first made them children, and so their disobedience however great robs them not of this blessed relationship. "What is it that "gives the sinner now a sure ground of confidence that returning to "God he shall not be repelled or cast out? The adoption of sonship, "which he received in Christ Jesus at his baptism, and his faith that "the gifts and calling of God are, on His part, without repentance or "recall. Wretched and degraded though he be, he may yet take that "dearest name of 'Father' on his lips, and claim anew his admission "into the household of faith, on the ground that he was once made "a member thereof, and that his privileges abide for him still in their "full force, however he may have chosen to remain in guilty ignorance "of them for so long" (*Trench.*).

"Against heaven." Whatever the sin may have been, the thought that it has been committed against God outweighs all other thoughts in the true penitent. Thus David, who had sinned grievously against man, can in his misery see nothing but his deep guilt towards God, and cries, "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned" (Ps. li. 4.). In the parable the father is of course supposed to be an earthly father, and so the son says, "Against heaven and before thee." But in the spiritual application, as Archbishop Trench rightly observes, the two melt into one—'I have sinned against Thee, my Father in heaven.'

19. "No more worthy" &c. Yet this hinders him not, for he knows that it is not his own worthiness, but his father's love, which will procure his acceptance. Still he will ask only for the lowest place in the household. Though he will say "Father," yet he will not presume upon being a son. He knows he has justly forfeited all right to a son's privileges, and if he may enter the house of his childhood once more, even though to do the lowest work, and to take the lowest place, he will be thankful.

20. "And he arose." Blessed they whose resolutions are not suffered to fade away, but are carried out as soon as made!

A.D. 30. [g] when he was yet a great way off, his father saw
[g] Acts 2. 39. Eph. 2. 13, 17. him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

21 And the son said unto him, Father, I have
[h] Ps. 51. 4. sinned against heaven, [h] and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.

22 But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put *it* on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on *his* feet:

"When he was yet a great way off," &c. What wondrous depth of mercy is here! This is indeed the crowning verse of the whole glorious parable. Had our Lord pictured the father as listening patiently to his son's confession, and then graciously granting him a fresh trial, and promising, if his conduct proved the reality of his professions, to pardon the past and restore him to favour, we should all have thought that the Prodigal was very mercifully dealt with. But this seeing him afar off, and running, and falling on his neck, and kissing him,—all this is such an excess of love and goodness that in the mere story it seems quite unnatural. What earthly father would do so much as this? But this is a picture not of man's mercy, but of God's. He sees the returning sinner while yet "a great way off,"—while his heart is as yet only beginning to turn to Him,—and He waits not till the wanderer has come back all the way: He is waiting to be gracious; more ready to forgive than the sinner to seek forgiveness; at once welcoming, receiving, restoring, the penitent. God does not wait till trial can be made of the reality of the penitence: He needs no trial to prove its reality. He does not wait till sin is conquered, and sanctification far advanced, before He forgives. In Christ Jesus the penitent sinner is at once pardoned and accepted. Let his penitence be sincere, and he is faithless to doubt God's pardon (See on St. Matt. xviii. 27.).

21. "Father, I have sinned" &c. The unexpected and overwhelming love of his father does not hinder his intended confession, though it does prevent his adding the petition to be made as one of the hired servants, which, after the proofs of love given him by his father would now have been a mere mock humility, for he knew his father had already raised him to a better place than that. But we must well mark that the fullest proof of forgiveness does not make the Prodigal forget his sin and unworthiness. Indeed we cannot doubt that such proof only deepened his sense of sin and consciousness of unworthiness. Pardon does not lessen repentance. David cried, "My sin is ever "before me" *after* Nathan had pronounced his absolution—"The Lord "hath put away thy sin."

22. "Bring forth the best robe," &c. The robe, the ring, the shoes, were all signs that the Prodigal was restored to the place of a son in his father's house, these not being worn by slaves. The word "best" here is literally 'first,' and some have understood by the 'first 'robe,' the robe which he had before he went away, which would mean the baptismal grace which he had forfeited. But probably our translation is right, 'first' meaning first in honour and dignity—not first in time. Many have understood by the robe either the robe of holiness,

23 and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill *it*; and let us eat, and be merry: A.D. 30.

24 [i] for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry. [i] ver. 32. Eph. 2. 1. & 5. 14. Rev. 3. 1.

25 Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard musick and dancing.

26 And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant.

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or the robe of imputed righteousness (See on the Wedding-garment St. Matt. xxii. 11.); by the ring either the seal of the Spirit, or a sign of betrothal to God; and by the shoes power to walk in the path of righteousness: but perhaps this is pressing the parable beyond what our Lord meant it to teach.

23. "The fatted calf." As for an occasion of great rejoicing, to show the joy in heaven over the sinner that repenteth.

24. "This my son was dead" &c. A state of sin is ever described as a state of spiritual death. The conversion of the sinner is a moral resurrection; and might well be called a regeneration or second-birth, but that that term has from the very first been always applied to the spiritual birth into God's family in Baptism.

25. "His elder son." The character and conduct of the elder son in this second part of the parable presents some difficulty. If he represents (as has been said on 11.) the self-righteous Pharisees, how can he be described as having remained faithful in his father's house and service? If, on the other hand, he represents the really righteous and faithful, how can he give way to jealousy and ingratitude? this difficulty is nearly the same as that suggested by the murmurings of the first-called labourers in the parable of the Labourers in the vineyard (See on St. Matt. xx. 11.). The true explanation seems to be that this elder son *does* represent the self-righteous Pharisees, but *only in the one point of their murmuring at the reception of the publicans and sinners* (See 2.), which it was our Lord's purpose to illustrate. As to the character of this son, it is a great mistake to regard him as "a model of self-righteousness, and Pharisaic pride." This is not consistent with his having lived so long happily and faithfully in his father's home. "He is rather one whose life has been well regulated—"one who has feared to offend; but, as is too often found in men of "regular lives, he is not yet perfect in love, and wants a lesson of "greater tenderness to sinners returning from the error of their ways" (*Archd. Churton.*).

"In the field." Doubtless (as would be customary in the East) engaged in some work for his father.

"Musick and dancing." Not only is there joy *in heaven* over the returning sinner, but also *to the sinner himself* there is often granted a joy and gladness in his first conversion to God beyond such as may be ordinarily looked for in the calm even course of a holy life.

26. "He called one of the servants," &c. A good and loving son would have hastened in at once, ready to rejoice in all that caused

A. D. 30.

27 And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound.

28 And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and intreated him.

29 And he answering said to *his* father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends:

30 but as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf.

31 And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine.

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his father joy. This son here begins to show his grudging and envious spirit.

28. "He was angry." Angry that so much should be made of one so undeserving as his prodigal brother.

"And would not go in." That is, would not join in the rejoicing over his brother's return, in this resembling the Pharisees and scribes who murmured at our Lord's reception of the publicans and sinners. Even when his father, in his loving forbearance, came out, and intreated him, he still hardened his heart. Thus for the time he changes places with his penitent brother. The younger is in his father's house; the elder is shut out. So the first is last and the last first (See on St. Matt. xix. 30. and xx. 16.).

29. "Lo, these many years" &c. The very language of self-righteousness—just what the Pharisees and scribes would say of themselves. We need not suppose this son to be one who had indulged at other times this spirit of pride and envy. It seems to be a sudden outbreak caused by his brother's reception, which had revealed the hidden evil of his heart (See on 25.).

"Thou never gavest me a kid," &c. Here is the root of his sin. He is reckoning his merits and claims, and thinking of receiving things from his father for his own enjoyment apart from him. It is, though in a less degree, the same spirit which made the younger son ask for his portion of goods that he might go away and enjoy it. This elder son had still to learn the blessedness of his own portion (See on 31.). The "kid" is named as something much less than the "fatted calf." It is not at all necessary to understand by the "friends" whom the elder son mentions any bad or unfit companions. He probably would only mean those like himself remaining faithful in his father's service.

30. "This thy son." Spoken in scorn: he will not say 'my brother.'

31. "Son, thou art ever with me," &c. The force here must be put upon the words "*with me*." The blessedness of the elder brother's portion was to have ever been with his father, and to have shared in all the happiness of that father's home. It is as though the father said, "What need to talk of other friends? Thou art ever with a better

32 It was meet that we should make merry, and A.D. 30.
be glad: [k] for this thy brother was dead, and is [k] ver. 24.
alive again; and was lost, and is found.

CHAPTER XVI.

1 *The parable of the unjust steward.* 14 *Christ reproveth the hypocrisy of the covetous Pharisees.* 19 *The rich glutton, and Lazarus the beggar.*

AND He said also unto His disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods.

"than them all, even myself. Why shouldest thou have expected a "kid, when all that I have is thine?" (*Trench.*). What if there be much rejoicing when a prodigal returns home? Has the faithful one, who has never gone far from home, cause for envy? Nay; his lot has been in reality far the more blessed of the two. He may never have experienced a joy as overflowing as that of the newly-returned penitent. He may never have been to others the cause of such an outburst of thankfulness. But his joy has in reality been "infinitely greater in "amount than this one burst of gladness, only it has been spread over "a far larger space of time." And if it be asked, 'Why has there been 'no such rejoicing for him?' the answer is, "Because he has ever been "with his father,—because his father's possessions are, and have been "always, his. His joy therefore is soberer and more solid,—not the "suddenly swelling mountain cataract, but the deep, though smooth "and silent, river" (*Cajetan quoted by Trench.*).

32. **"This thy brother."** Whom he would not speak of as such, but scornfully called "this thy son" (30.), so that the father here conveys a tender rebuke for his unbrotherly spirit.

"Was dead, and is alive again." Thus the conversion of a sinner might fitly be called his new birth or regeneration, had not this expression been from the first used of Baptism (See on 24, and on St. John iii. 5.), so that its use for conversion would cause, and indeed has often in modern times caused, much confusion. Yet indeed the change is no less than a change from death to life, a very resurrection. The *first* new-birth—the *first* resurrection with Christ—is in the waters of Baptism: the *second* is amid the tears of penitence. Both are the work of the Holy Spirit.

We are not told the end of this elder brother; and whether he afterwards repented and went in, or not, is left unspoken. Most wisely: for in this way would his example far more keenly touch the consciences of the murmuring Pharisees and scribes, for whose repentance a door was thus graciously left open.

CHAPTER XVI.

1—13. The Parable of the Unjust Steward.

1. **"A certain rich man, which had a steward."** By a "steward" is meant an agent, or manager of his property. No doubt in the spiritual meaning the "rich man" signifies God, but our attention

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2 And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward.

3 Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed.

4 I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.

5 So he called every one of his lord's debtors *unto him*, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord?

6 And he said, An hundred [2] measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty.

[2] The word *Batus* in the original containeth nine gallons three quarts: See Ezek. 45. 10, 11, 14.

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is wholly turned upon the steward, and we are not meant to look for any instruction concerning God from the conduct or words of the master, except in so far as he calls on the steward to render up an account of his stewardship. The steward represents each one of us to whom God has entrusted worldly means, or the power of doing good.

"The same was accused" &c. The steward was justly accused; for though he had not yet committed the gross wrong of altering his master's books, and thus robbing him deliberately, he had no doubt been a bad steward, living in plenty, and neglecting his master's interests.

2. "Give an account" &c. So God calls upon us to give an account of our stewardship. This is not on the great day of account alone. Indeed this would not fit with the story of the parable, for it is rather a notice or warning which is here spoken of than a final reckoning. Thus this giving of account exactly answers to the taking of account by the king in the parable of the Unmerciful Servant, and signifies any time when God, by His warnings, reminds us that our stewardship must shortly be ended, and an account of it given (See on St. Matt. xviii. 23.).

3. "What shall I do?" &c. This represents the utter helplessness of the steward of God's gifts to provide for himself. If he lose his stewardship, and cannot render a good account of it, he has no resource: he is destitute and helpless.

4. "They may receive me." That is, his master's debtors. This is one of the chief points of the parable. Its main lesson turns upon the anxious efforts of a bad man to secure a home for the future (See on 9.).

5. "His lord's debtors." Probably these were merchants or dealers, who owed the rich man for corn and oil, the produce of his estate.

6. "An hundred measures of oil." This was strictly what the debtor owed *for*, rather than what he owed. He owed the *payment* for this quantity of oil, for which he had, as it seems, given his note of hand, as a receipt for the goods and acknowledgement of the debt.

"Take thy bill," &c. That is, 'Take back thy bill.' The unjust

7 Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, An hundred [2] measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore.

8 And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than [a] the children of light.

9 And I say unto you, [b] Make to yourselves

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[2] The word here interpreted *a measure* in the original containeth about fourteen bushels and a pottle.

[a] John 12. 36. Eph. 5. 8. 1 Thess. 5. 5.

[b] Dan. 4. 27. Matt. 6. 19. & 19. 21. ch. 11. 41. 1 Tim. 6. 17, 18, 19.

steward returns to these debtors their notes of hand for the goods they had received from the estate, bidding them alter the amount to a less figure, thus plotting with them to cheat his own employer. He bids them do it "quickly," probably fearing his wicked plan would not otherwise be carried out before he would have to render his account.

8. "The lord commended." Of course no attentive reader could make the mistake of supposing "the lord" here to mean our Lord. The words are part of the parable, and spoken by our Lord Himself. Still it would perhaps be clearer, if it were translated, 'the master,' or 'his master,' "commended"—that is, praised or applauded—"the "unjust steward." Plainly this means, after he had discovered the steward's dishonesty. But how then could his master praise him? The next words show.

"Because he had done wisely." "Wisely" in this place means 'prudently.' The steward had done cleverly and well for his own interests, and his master, though he found out his wicked tricks, praised him for this—his forethought in securing some to befriend him when he is turned out of his place.

"For the children of this world" &c. Here begins our Lord's own comment upon the parable. The parable ends with the master's praise of his steward's clever prudence. Jesus upon this—to explain it, and prevent any mistake,—adds these words, which show plainly enough what sort of wisdom it was which the master in the parable praised. It was pure worldly wisdom,—the wisdom of a bad crafty man. The point of this our Lord's explanation lies in the words "in their genera-"tion", on which in reading great force should be laid. This expression is more exactly translated—'unto' or 'towards their generation'—that is, those like themselves. 'The wicked,' our Lord says, 'are wiser 'in their dealings with those of their own kind than the good are in 'theirs.' Plainly the master's debtors were those of *his own generation*, in dealing with whom the steward had shown so much worldly wisdom. They were bad men like himself. And so comes out the great lesson of the parable. It is simply this: The good may learn wisdom and forethought from the bad. Nay, the bad shame the good by their greater wisdom and zeal in their own affairs. The bad are wiser in worldly things than the good in heavenly. "The children of light "are not at half the pains to win heaven which the men of this world "are to win earth: the world is better served by its servants than "God is by His" (*Abp. Trench.*).

9. "Make to yourselves friends" &c. The word "of" here is literally 'out of'—'Make friends *out of* the mammon of unrighteousness',

A.D. 30. friends of the [2]mammon of unrighteousness; that,
2 Or, *riches.* when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.

c Matt. 25. 21. ch. 19. 17. 10 c He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.

11 If therefore ye have not been faithful in
3 Or, *riches.* the unrighteous [3]mammon, who will commit to your trust the true *riches?*

12 And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?

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or, in other words, 'Use the mammon of unrighteousness as a means of 'making friends.' "Mammon" means money (See St. Matt. vi. 24.). But why is it called "unrighteous"? Certainly our Lord does not mean money unjustly got. In verse 11 the "unrighteous mammon" is opposed to the "true riches", and so means simply worldly wealth. We must therefore understand our Lord to speak of wealth as "unrighteous" on account of its great temptations. "Riches", says Bishop Wilson, "are almost always either the fruit or the seed of "unrighteousness." This wealth—so often abused—Christ bids us use in making to ourselves friends. That is, we are to do good with it, and so to attach the poor and needy to us, and make them our friends.

"When ye fail." That is, 'when ye die.'

"They may receive you" &c. The unjust steward so dealt with the money entrusted to him as to secure friends ready to receive him when he was turned out of his stewardship. Do, ye Christians, the same. Use your money to make friends of the poor, who, when ye die and render up your stewardship, shall welcome you—not to a poor temporary earthly home, like those of the unjust steward's friends, but—to the "everlasting habitations" of heaven. It is well to mark the hint we have here that we shall meet and know in heaven the friends whom we have known on earth. If those whom we have benefited on earth shall meet and welcome us in heaven, surely also will beloved friends and relatives do the same (See on 23.).

10. **"He that is faithful" &c.** Our Lord speaks no more of prudence. He now points to a higher grace—faithfulness. His hearers might possibly fancy He approved of that crafty wisdom in the unjust steward which He only spoke of to shame them by contrasting it with their own careless indifference as to their future prospects. So now He commends a faithful use of money, declaring it to be a good test of faithfulness in greater and higher things.

11. **"If therefore" &c.** If you have proved yourselves unfaithful in your stewardship of that worldly wealth with which God has tried you, can you think He will bestow upon you the true riches of his kingdom?

12. **"Another man's, . . your own."** By "another man's" is

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9. "*When ye fail.*" It should perhaps be noted that there is another reading, resting on very high authority, which would be translated 'when it fails'—that is, 'when the worldly wealth fails'. The sense is not very different.

13 [d] No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. A.D. 30. [d] Matt. 6. 24.

14 ¶ And the Pharisees also, [e] who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided Him. [e] Matt. 23. 14.

15 And He said unto them, Ye are they which [f] justify yourselves before men; but [g] God knoweth your hearts: for [h] that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God. [f] ch. 10. 29. [g] Ps. 7. 9. [h] 1 Sam. 16. 7.

16 [i] The law and the prophets *were* until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it. [i] Matt. 4. 17. & 11. 12, 13. ch. 7. 29.

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plainly meant that worldly wealth which you cannot call your own, because you are only a steward of it. The heavenly inheritance is called "your own", because, when once possessed, it is yours to enjoy for ever, and you have no more any account to render.

13. "No servant" &c. This is repeated here from the Sermon on the Mount (See St. Matt. vi. 24.), and teaches us that by *unfaithfulness* in the management of our earthly wealth is meant a *love* of it. Covetousness is dishonesty towards God. We cannot love riches, and be faithful stewards.

14—18. Rebuke of the Pharisees.

14. "All these things." Probably this includes the three parables in the last chapter, which were spoken expressly against the Pharisees and Scribes, though they seem to have been more annoyed by the rebuke of covetousness following upon the parable of the Unjust Steward.

"They derided Him." They mocked and laughed at Him.

15. "Which justify yourselves." That is, 'which put on the appearance of righteousness.' This is simply an accusation of hypocrisy (See on St. Matt. vi. 2.). God, who knew the hearts of these Pharisees, saw their covetousness, as well as other sins; and, much as men might esteem them, seeing only the outside, in God's sight they were hateful.

16. "The law and the prophets" &c. This verse appears to be a rebuke to the Pharisees for not accepting and entering into that kingdom of God, for which the law and the prophets had been so long preparing them (See on St. Matt. xi. 12.). By "every man presseth "into it" our Lord describes the zeal with which numbers sought to enter in. Of course He does not mean literally "*every* man", but it is as if He said, 'Men are every where pressing in.' These men might have taught the Pharisees, only they were too proud to follow. The verse is spoken in much the same sense as when our Lord, speaking to the "chief priests and elders," who were mainly Pharisees, said, "John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him "not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when "ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him" (St. Matt. xxi. 32.).

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17 [k] And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.

18 [l] Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from *her* husband committeth adultery.

19 ¶ There was a certain rich man, which was

k Ps. 102. 26, 27. Isai. 40. 8. & 51. 6. Matt. 5. 18. 1 Pet. 1. 25.
l Matt. 5. 32. & 19. 9. Mark 10. 11. 1 Cor. 7. 10, 11.

17. "And it is easier" &c. Our Lord's hearers might think that, having spoken of the law as having been "until John", He meant that from that time the law was destroyed. He therefore guards His words by briefly repeating what He had fully taught in the Sermon on the Mount, namely, that the Gospel is no destruction of the law, but its fulfilment (See on St. Matt. v. 17, 18.).

18. "Whosoever putteth away" &c. Why our Lord selects this one portion of God's Law to enforce at this particular time we cannot tell. Probably something in the conversation of the by-standers may have suggested it. We must observe how completely unqualified the rule is, as here given. No exception is hinted at (See on St. Matt. v. 31, 32. and xix. 1—12.).

19—31. The Rich Man and Lazarus.

19. "There was a certain rich man," &c. In the Greek there is a little word joining this verse on to what has gone before, which may be given in English by the word 'now'—'Now there was' &c. Perhaps it is not wise to press these little marks of connection too strongly, but it certainly seems as though this parable was spoken in connection with the foregoing discourse, and therefore addressed mainly to the Pharisees. It is true the Pharisees were never accused of riotous or luxurious living. Indeed they were the strictest party among the Jews in all their conduct. But they were "covetous" (14.), and "derided" our Lord's teaching concerning the true use of money in the parable of the Unjust Steward. This parable thus meets those scoffs by showing a picture of one who did not, in the true sense, make to himself "friends of the mammon of unrighteousness" (9.), but used that "unrighteous mammon" unrighteously—because selfishly. It is a most serious warning to the rich against any selfish use of their riches, whether it be by a refined self-indulgence or a covetous hoarding.

It has been often pointed out that this is not a parable in the strict meaning of the word—'a story with an inner and spiritual meaning' (See on St. Matt. xiii. 3.); inasmuch as the rich man stands for a rich man, and the poor man for a poor man, and the whole is of the nature of a history rather than a parable. On the other hand there is no sufficient reason to suppose that it is (as some have thought) a history of two real persons (See on 20.). Rather it is a history of two imaginary persons who represent the two classes to which they belong—the rich who are poor in grace, and the poor who are rich in faith. We need not then refuse to call this story a parable, though it is not one in quite the usual sense.

clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: A.D. 30.

20 and there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,

21 and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;

"Purple and fine linen." The purple dye in ancient times was very costly, being obtained from a certain sea-shell. The city of Tyre was famous for its goods dyed with this colour. The "fine linen", used for the under clothing, was also very costly, and only used by the rich.

"Sumptuously." That is, richly, expensively.

20. "Lazarus." The rich man's name is not told us. In the book of God's remembrance his name is not found. "Lazarus" was a name "written in heaven" (x. 20.). The mention of the name of the poor beggar is the chief reason assigned for believing this to be a history of two real persons. But the meaning of the name—'God is my help'—is a sufficient reason for our Lord's adopting it, since it so well describes the character of the poor man.

"Laid at his gate." Probably by some who did for him this kindness, thinking he would surely be cared for by the rich man, when he saw his piteous condition.

21. "Desiring." Longing for the crumbs, and, as we can hardly doubt is meant, denied even this small boon. Probably the rich man scarcely noticed him; though his knowing him after death seems to show that he knew him by sight before. What an opportunity he lost of making to himself a friend by his wealth, who might have received him into the "everlasting habitations"! (See on 9.).

"The dogs came" &c. The only things that pitied him, and tended him. Some however think that this is meant to describe the lowest depth of misery, and that these dogs, which wander unowned in all Eastern cities, living on the offal thrown out into the streets, and looked upon with horror by the people, were ready to devour the poor man's dying frame, while he had no power to drive them away. It is however best to take the other meaning, and to suppose the tenderness of the very dogs is set against the hardness of the rich man and his servants.

22. "Was carried." That is, his spirit was carried.

"Abraham's bosom." This was the Jewish expression for the happy rest of the faithful dead. It is the same as Paradise (See on xxiii. 43.), the place where "the souls of the righteous are in the Hand of God, "and there shall no torment touch them" (Wisd. iii. 1.); for "there the "wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary be at rest" (Job iii. 17.). It is necessary carefully to distinguish between this happy abode of departed spirits, and the final glory of heaven, into which the saints shall enter after the Resurrection and Judgment of the last day.

"Was buried." No doubt with all pomp and magnificence, as

A.D. 30. 23 and in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

became a rich man. The poor man's burial is not mentioned. That was an event of no note. What if the mourners at that great funeral could have had their eyes opened to see what was taking place in the world of spirits!

23. "In hell." There are two very different Greek words, both of which are unhappily expressed in English by the same word—'hell'. There is, first, 'Hades',—the place of departed spirits; and, secondly, 'Gehenna', the place of torment. The former is a temporary abode of the spirits of the dead both good and bad between death and resurrection. The latter is the final and eternal abode of the lost after the Resurrection and Judgment. Here our Lord uses the former word —'Hades', what He relates being wholly about the state of the dead while separate from the body, between death and resurrection: and it is the more important to remember this because the mention of the "torments" and the "flame" would naturally lead us to suppose Him to be speaking of 'Gehenna', or hell-fire. We learn however here that in the place of departed spirits—'Hades'—there are two separate parts, one of peace and joy called "Abraham's bosom", and elsewhere "Paradise"; the other of torment and misery, which latter has no distinctive name, being here simply spoken of as 'Hades' (See *Note*.).

"He lift up his eyes, being in torments." We know so little of the separate spiritual existence that we can only speak of it in words borrowed from the body. The "eyes" here are the spiritual sight: the "torments" mental sufferings.

"Seeth Abraham" &c. Again not literally, with any bodily sight. It is interpreting our Lord's words in the letter, and not in the spirit, to represent them as showing that the good and bad will be within sight and hearing of each other, or able to hold converse, in the unseen world. Our Lord so speaks in His parable for the purpose of making His picture more vivid and His lesson more pointed. The rich man was in some way, we know not how, made conscious of the happy state of the once despised beggar. It is plain that we have here an argument for the knowing of each other by the dead. We cannot tell in what sense the rich man *saw* Abraham and Lazarus, but certainly he knew who they were (See on 9.).

23. "*Hell.*" It will help us to clearer ideas as to the difference between the place of departed spirits ('Hades') and the place of eternal torment ('Gehenna') if we notice the use of the two words in the New Testament, remembering that the former being used for the place of the departed is sometimes used almost in the sense of death. 1. 'Hades' is used in the following places:—Where our Lord speaks of Capernaum being "cast "down to hell"—that is, simply to destruction, or nothingness—(St. Matt. xi. 23. St. Luke x. 15.): where our Lord says of His Church, "The gates of hell" (in the same sense as the last) "shall "not prevail against it" (St. Matt. xvi. 18.): in the discourse of St. Peter concerning our Lord's soul being "not left in "hell" (Acts ii. 27, 31.): where St. Paul cries, "O grave" ('Hades'), "where is thy "victory?" (1 Cor. xv. 55.): and lastly in three passages in the Revelation, where it is very plain that the place of final punishment cannot be meant (Rev. i. 18. vi. 8. and xx. 13, 14.). 2. 'Gehenna' is used in the following places: Where our Lord speaks of the "danger of hell "fire" (St. Matt. v. 22.): where He speaks of losing one member rather than that the whole body should be cast into hell (St. Matt. v. 29, 30. xviii. 9. St. Mark

24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and [m] cool my tongue; for I [n] am tormented in this flame. A.D. 30.

25 But Abraham said, Son, [o] remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

26 And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that *would come* from thence.

[m] Zech. 14. 12.
[n] Isai. 66. 24. Mark 9. 44, &c.
[o] Job 21. 13. ch. 6. 24.

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24. "Father Abraham," &c. Doubtless, like other Jews, this rich man had trusted to his descent from Abraham for acceptance with God (See on St. Matt. iii. 9.). He now finds how vain was this trust. Abraham might be his father according to the flesh, but the true children of Abraham are they who walk in the faith of Abraham (Rom. iv. 12.). The "finger", the "tongue", the "flame", all these are spoken in a figure. The words are taken from bodily things to represent to us spiritual things. The rich man was in great torment and cried out for help to his "father Abraham." "The 'Have mercy upon me' "was well in itself, but not addressed to the right Father" (*Stier.*). It has been well pointed out that the tongue is pictured as the seat of special suffering, because the tongue had before been the instrument of special self-indulgence.

25. "Son, remember" &c. Abraham speaks with gentle compassion. The "Son" is perhaps not so much an acknowledgement of the rich man as a descendant (for what would fleshly descent be in the world of spirits?), as an address of love and pity. The "Remember" is to awaken the rich man to a sense of the justice of his present torments. He had his good things where he sought them—in this life; just as the Pharisees, who sought only the praise of men, had "their reward" (St. Matt. vi. 2, 5, 16.). It is important to mark the little word "thy", —"*thy* good things", that is, 'the good things thou desiredst'; else we might fall into the great error of supposing our Lord to teach that prosperity in this world will be punished in the next, and suffering in this world rewarded in the next. Prosperity brings punishment, when it draws the heart from God: suffering brings reward, when it is borne with humble patience. But it is the selfishness, not the prosperity, which is punished; the patience, not the suffering, which is rewarded.

26. "A great gulf fixed." Both of distance and of condition. Good and bad are separated at once after death. And this separation is "fixed", so that there is, and can be, no passing to and fro.

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ix. 43, 45, 47.): Where He speaks of God being able to destroy both soul and body in hell (St. Matt. x. 28. St. Luke xii. 5.): in the expression "Child of hell" (St. Matt. xxiii. 15.): in the question, "How can ye escape the damnation of "hell?" (St. Matt. xxiii. 33.): and lastly in St. James' saying that the tongue is "set on fire of hell" (St. James iii. 6.). It should be added that in the Creeds of the Church "hell" is 'Hades', not 'Gehenna.'

A.D. 30.

27 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house:

28 for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

p Isai. 8. 20. & 34. 16. John 5. 39, 45. Acts 15. 21. & 17. 11.

29 Abraham saith unto him, p They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.

30 And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.

q John 12. 10, 11.

31 And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, q neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

CHAPTER XVII.

1 *Christ teacheth to avoid occasions of offence.* 3 *One to forgive another.* 6 *The power of faith.* 7 *How we are bound to God, and not He to us.* 11 *He healeth ten lepers.* 22 *Of the kingdom of God, and the coming of the Son of man.*

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27. "My father's house." That is, his earthly father's house, his former home, when on earth. Abraham had spoken of no "great gulf" between Paradise *and earth*, and so the rich man thought Lazarus might perhaps be allowed to go thither. We find in this request a hint as to the remembrance of those still alive by the dead. If this miserable man could "in hell" think of his five brethren still on earth, much more may we suppose the spirits of the blest able to take an interest in those they have known and loved in this life. As to their being able to visit them we have no hint given.

29. "They have Moses and the prophets." That is, They have sufficient witness—sufficient light—if they really desire to know God's will.

"Let them hear them." Not 'Let them listen to' only—but 'Let 'them *obey* them.' The word "hear" has in the Greek this fuller meaning.

30. "Nay, father Abraham," &c. The rich man thought, from his own experience, and from his knowledge of his brethren, that they were little likely to repent through the teaching of Moses and the prophets, and he pleaded with Abraham that a visitor from the dead, to assure them of the truth of the world to come, and of the misery of the godless there, would awaken them to a real sense of their danger.

31. "If they hear not" &c. This seems a strange and startling answer. Yet was it not proved to be true? A Lazarus was indeed to go to the unbelieving people from the dead:—not the Lazarus in Abraham's bosom, but the Lazarus of Bethany; yet his resurrection only roused the Pharisees to more active measures against Christ. And One far greater than Lazarus was to come from the dead, yet neither then were they persuaded. The truth is, the faith and repentance which the "five brethren" needed, did not require any stronger testimony on which to rest. They had all the proof they could want. The *heart* and the *will* were wrong, and these are not changed by startling wonders, but by the grace of God.

THEN said He unto the disciples, [a]It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe *unto him*, through whom they come! A.D. 30.
[a] Matt. 18. 6, 7. Mark 9. 42. 1 Cor. 11. 19.

2 It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.

3 Take heed to yourselves: [b]If thy brother trespass against thee, [c]rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.
[b] Matt. 18. 15, 21. [c] Lev. 19. 17. Prov. 17. 10. James 5. 19.

4 And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.

CHAPTER XVII.

1—6. Sayings concerning offences, forgiveness, and faith.

1. "**Offences.**" Occasions to fall, or temptations to sin (See on St. Matt. xvii. 27.). To tempt others, especially the young or weak, to sin, is verily to do the devil's own work. This verse and the next occur, though in different order, in the discourse upon Christ's little ones in St. Matthew (xviii. 6, 7.).

3. "**If thy brother trespass**" &c. This may be connected with the foregoing as teaching Christians how to treat offences when they arise from brother Christians. The "Rebuke him" seems to answer to the "Tell him his fault between thee and him alone" (See on St. Matt. xviii. 15—18, where this point is differently treated.). Plainly the "rebuke" must be gentle and patient, not in anger or resentment. It must spring from a heart which has already forgiven, though the *word* of forgiveness may be withheld till he repent, or express his sorrow.

4. "**Seven times in a day.**" A saying as much without limit as the "seventy times seven" (St. Matt. xviii. 22.).

"**Saying, I repent.**" We should certainly be less inclined to believe in the reality of the sorrow the seventh time than the first. But we need not judge of that. Christ does not say, 'if he repent', but 'if he '*say*, I repent.' The expression of sorrow ought to satisfy us. However often a brother humbles himself to say he is sorry, and to ask pardon, we must be ready to forgive. Is not this the way we hope God will deal with us? (See on St. Matt. vi. 14, 15.)

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1. "*Then said He.*" This is simply 'And He said' in the Greek, and is thus not of necessity connected in any way with what has gone before. It may have been spoken at quite another time. Again we cannot be sure whether the sayings recorded in the first ten verses of this chapter were spoken all together, or are simply gathered together by St. Luke. There is however a sufficiently clear connection between the first six verses to make it probable that they form one unbroken conversation.

4. "*Seven times a day.*" Here a third time within the space of four verses we are reminded of the same chapter in St. Matthew (xviii.), these words seeming to refer to St. Peter's question as to forgiving his brother seven times. We must however beware of supposing that St. Luke is here simply giving a different version of the discourse related by St. Matthew. The differences in all this passage concerning the brother's trespass are far too great for that. It is much better to suppose our Lord to be here briefly touching on the same points which He there more fully discusses.

A.D. 30. 5 And the apóstles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.

d Matt. 17. 20. & 21. 21. Mark 9. 23. & 11. 23. 6 d And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you.

7 ¶ But which of you, having a servant plowing

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5. "Increase our faith." If this petition followed the foregoing words, it would seem that the Apostles felt that their Master's rule was hard to obey, and that to do so they needed a stronger faith than they already possessed. Their petition is like that of the father of the lunatic child, "Lord, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief" (See on St. Mark ix. 24.). These petitions—so suitable for us with our weak dim faith—are made to Him who best can grant them, for Jesus is the "author"—that is, beginner—"and finisher of our faith." He plants the grain of mustard-seed, and He makes it grow.

6. "If ye had faith" &c. The wonderful power of faith is spoken of in a like manner on other occasions (See on St. Matt. xvii. 20.). The plucking up of the tree—(no doubt our Lord pointed, as He spoke, to one before Him)—and the planting of it in the sea is a simple natural impossibility, like the removal of mountains, and Christ thus spoke in order to show that faith could work works in the spiritual world quite impossible to the natural man. The charity which could forgive a brother seven times a day seemed to the Apostles such an impossibility. Yet faith—even a little grain of true living faith—could do greater things than this. It could remove mountains of pride and obstinacy, and pluck up by the roots the firmest, most deeply-rooted, habits of sin. We may notice that the grain of mustard-seed signifies more than simply the least portion. It is not the same as a grain of sand. The seed has life in itself, and the power of growth, and the germ of a great tree. And so true faith, even if small and weak at first, will grow and increase till it can do mighty works. Thus our Lord answers the prayer "Increase our faith", by words which would set forth to the Apostles the manner of its increase. It must grow like the seed. Yet He will foster and nourish it.

"Sycamine tree." This is the same as the mulberry.

7—10. Unprofitable Servants.

7. "But which of you," &c. This is a short parable, drawn from every-day life. If taken in close connection with the foregoing, it would be a warning against any pride or reliance in such mighty works as might be performed by faith; as though the lesson were, But after all, even if your faith were strong enough to enable you to overcome all difficulties and perform all God's will, you would have no ground of boasting; for are you not God's servants, bound to do all that He commands?

"A servant." Literally 'a slave',—one bought with a price, and absolutely belonging to the master, thus making the parallel with ourselves more exact.

or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat? A. D. 30.

8 And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, [e] and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink? [e] ch. 12. 37.

9 Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not. [f] Job 22. 3. & 35. 7. Ps. 16. 2. Matt. 25. 30. Rom. 3. 12. & 11. 35. 1 Cor. 9. 16, 17. Philem. 11.

10 So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are [f] unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.

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8. "Will not rather say" &c. That is, before a master will let his servant rest and enjoy himself, he makes him complete his work, and fulfil all his wishes. So we must not expect God to be satisfied, and to reward us, when we have done some few things, for we owe Him all we can do. This certainly sets before us our relation to God in its harder and sterner aspect. But how lovingly does our Lord present to us the other side, when He says, "Blessed are those servants, whom "the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, "that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and "will come forth and serve them" (xii. 37.). The one view teaches us how to look upon our own work, that we may be very humble; the other teaches us how Christ will look upon it, that we may be very hopeful. Would we serve God well? Then must we know, first our own nothingness, and secondly the Saviour's love.

9. "Doth he thank" &c. That is, 'Does he think he owes that 'servant any particular thanks for doing only the work he is bound 'and kept to do?'

10. "Say, We are unprofitable servants." "Miserable is he whom "God calls an 'unprofitable servant' (See St. Matt. xxv. 30.): happy "is he who calls himself so" (*Bengel.*). By thus speaking we mean that we have no claim on God, as though we had done Him any service beyond what we were bound to do. If we had done—or could do—*all*, this would be true. What then must we say of ourselves, when we have done so little, and left undone so much? Well may the Apostle say, "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His "sight" (Rom. iii. 20.); and well may the Psalmist pray, "Enter not "into judgment with Thy servant, O Lord, for in Thy sight shall no "man living be justified" (Ps. cxliii. 2.).

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11. "*Through the midst of Samaria and Galilee.*" This probably means on the borders between Samaria and Galilee. If so, our Lord may have been at this time passing towards the Jordan in order to cross it and travel through Peræa; this being the same journey as that mentioned in St. Matt. xix. 1, where see *Note*. This was indeed the usual route by which Galilæan Jews travelled to Jerusalem, the river Jordan being crossed twice in order to avoid passing through the unfriendly Samaria.

A. D. 30. 11 ¶ And it came to pass, [g] as He went to Jeru-
[g] Luke 9. 51, 52. John 4. 4. salem, that He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee.

12 And as He entered into a certain village, there
[h] Lev. 13. 46. met Him ten men that were lepers, [h] which stood afar off:

13 and they lifted up *their* voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.

14 And when He saw *them*, He said unto them,
[i] Lev. 13. 2. & 14. 2. Matt. 8. 4. ch. 5. 14. [i] Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed.

15 And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God,

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11—19. The cleansing of the Ten Lepers.

12. "Lepers, which stood afar off." This lepers were compelled to do, giving warning of their presence by the cry, 'Unclean, unclean', that no one might be polluted by touching them accidentally (See on St. Matt. viii. 2.).

14. "Go shew yourselves unto the priests." This must have seemed a strange command, for they were not yet cleansed, and to show themselves to the priests while still leprous would be absurd. It proves then that these men had at least some measure of faith in their coming cure that they obeyed at once this strange command, and set out to do as our Lord had bidden them. We cannot fail to observe how very differently our Lord performs His cures in different cases, doubtless suiting His manner of healing to the special circumstances and character and faith of the person to be healed. He seems in the present case to be putting to the proof the faith of these ten lepers, and also testing their gratitude, for the sake of our instruction. We have in this command, "Go shew yourselves unto the priests", a remarkable instance of our Lord's constant respect for the Law and Religion of the Jews, even though administered by unworthy men (See on St. Matt. xxiii. 2,3.). A question has been raised as to whether the Samaritan leper would be sent to his own priest, who would be a priest of a false faith, or to the Jewish priest who would probably decline to have any dealings with him. It is a question of little importance, but as the visit to the priest was chiefly to obtain a certificate of health which would gain the healed man admittance to all places of general resort, our Lord may in this case have left the command quite general, allowing each to go to his own priest.

"As they went, they were cleansed." And in simple unquestioning obedience to our Lord's commands, and use of the means He gives us, shall we too find the healing of our souls. We must not wait till we *feel* we are healed. That is want of faith. But, believing Christ's promises, we must go on obeying His commands, and the healing will come as and when He pleases.

15. "Turned back." It seems probable that the band of lepers had

16 and fell down on *his* face at His feet, giving Him thanks: and he was a Samaritan. A.D. 30.

17 And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where *are* the nine?

18 There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.

19 [k] And He said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.

[k] Matt. 9. 22. Mark 5. 34. & 10. 52. ch. 7. 50. & 8. 48. & 18. 42.

20 ¶ And when He was demanded of the Pha-

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gone some distance before they perceived that they were healed. Thus it would be an act taking up time and causing trouble to return to our Lord. And only one had sufficient gratitude for this! Doubtless they all would *speak of* their thankfulness. Only one took pains to prove it. It appears that this man turned back immediately he was healed, without waiting to go to the priest.

"Glorified God." We should rather expect 'gave thanks unto Jesus', for why was it needful to *turn back* in order to glorify God? Surely this poor Samaritan must have felt that in the presence of Jesus he was nearer to God, and, though we are not to understand that he glorified Jesus as God, yet he could not glorify God aright without grateful homage to Him who had healed him by the power of God. Our Lord Himself allows this truth—namely that returning to offer Him thanks was returning to glorify God (18.).

16. "A Samaritan." Whom a common misery had joined to those who else would have been his bitter foes (See on St. Matt. x. 5.).

17. "Where are the nine?" This must be evermore the sad enquiry concerning those to whom God has shown any special mercy. Of such as have been spared in dangerous sickness, or delivered from some great peril, or of such as have received some unlooked for blessing, must we not ask, "Where are the nine?"

18. "Save this stranger." In this Samaritan—a "stranger" as he was to the stock and religion of Israel—might have been seen by those who had eyes to see a pledge of the freedom of God's mercies in Christ. This stranger received a blessing which the nine Jews lost through their ingratitude.

19. "Thy faith hath made thee whole." This might be said of all ten in regard to their bodily healing. Their faith received that. But this one's gratitude won for him more than that. His faith worked by love; and his healing was a better healing than theirs: for doubtless he was made whole in soul as well as body, and went away blest with a spiritual healing, which would rouse fresh gratitude in his already grateful heart.

20—37. The Coming of the Kingdom of God, and the Coming of the Lord.

Compare St. Matt. xxiv. (Verses referred to in the margin.)

20. "When He was demanded." That is, 'asked', doubtless, as usual, with a wish to entangle Him in His talk, and not with any honest desire to learn. The Pharisees certainly did not understand the "kingdom of God" aright, and looked for something visible and external

A. D. 30. risees, when the kingdom of God should come, He answered them and said, The kingdom of God
2 Or, *without outward shew.* cometh not [2] with observation:
1 ver. 23. 21 [1] neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there!
m Rom. 14. 17. 2 Or, *among you,* for, behold, [m] the kingdom of God is [2] within you.
John 1. 26. 22 And He said unto the disciples, [n] The days
n See Matt. 9. 15. John 17. 12. will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see *it.*
o Matt. 24. 23. Mark 13. 21. ch. 21. 8. 23 [o] And they shall say to you, See here; or, see there: go not after *them,* nor follow *them.*

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in its greatness and glory. They had heard first St. John the Baptist and afterwards Christ Himself declaring this kingdom to be at hand, and they now ask—it would seem in mocking unbelief—when it would really come.

"Not with observation." Not with outward pomp and show (See *Margin*), so that all men could mark and observe it.

21. "Lo here! or, lo there!" So that we dare not point to any special place—or any special church—or any special persons—and say, 'There, and not elsewhere, is the kingdom of God.'

"Within you." This would be better 'among you' (as in *Margin*). It certainly was not "*within*" the Pharisees to whom our Lord was speaking. Yet '*among*' them it was, claiming its subjects—here one and there one—from the ranks of those whom the Pharisees scorned and despised. It is true the word translated "within" may mean this equally with 'among'; and possibly the very double meaning of the word itself may have been intended to turn the gaze of the Pharisees from things of outward observation to the secrets of their own hearts, and to lead them to grasp the truth that the kingdom already '*among*' them might also become "*within*" them, if they would.

22. "The days will come," &c. Our Lord has turned from the Pharisees to His disciples, though probably still speaking within hearing of the latter. From the presence of the kingdom among them He naturally passes to the presence of the King. It is as though He said, turning to His disciples, 'Even *ye* know not the greatness of your 'privileges, and *who* and *what* is among you.'

"One of the days of the Son of man." One of the days of His sojourn with you on earth. This, when that sojourn is over and the Bridegroom is taken away from you, ye shall long for in vain, wishing ye had valued His presence more when ye had it. If the Pharisees were listening to these words, they would seem to cry out to them, "While ye are spending your time in questionings, I am passing away, "and the day of grace is going!" (*Stier.*).

23. "See here; or, see there." Jesus had just said that they should

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20. "*The kingdom of God.*" See on St. Matth. iii. 2.

23–37. There is much in this discourse very similar to the great discourse on the Mount of Olives recorded in St. Matth. xxiv, St. Mark xiii, and St. Luke xxi. We must not however confound this discourse with that. This refers simply to the coming of the Lord, and not at all to the destruction of Jerusalem. It is a brief forestalling of some of the warnings of that longer and later discourse, and these warnings St. Luke omits in his version of that discourse in xxi, probably to avoid repetition.

24 [p] For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one *part* under heaven, shineth unto the other *part* under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in His day. A. D. 30. [p] Matt. 24. 27.

25 [q] But first must He suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation. [q] Mark 8. 31. & 9. 31. & 10. 33. ch. 9. 22.

26 [r] And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. [r] Gen. 7. Matt. 24. 37.

27 They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.

28 [s] Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; [s] Gen. 19.

29 but [t] the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed *them* all. [t] Gen. 19. 16, 24.

30 Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man [u] is revealed. [u] 2 Thes. 1. 7.

31 In that day, he [x] which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back. [x] Matt. 24. 17. Mark 13. 15.

32 [y] Remember Lot's wife. [y] Gen. 19. 26.

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long in vain for another sight of their Lord in the flesh. So they must not be deceived by any pretending to show them Christ, or to be themselves the Christ. It will be the same with the King as with the kingdom. Men will say, "Lo here! or, Lo there!" As they have thought to find the kingdom of Christ in some special place, or visible power; so will they think to find Christ Himself in many false and foolish ways. But let His people wait for Him; for His coming will be such as none can mistake—sudden, manifest, startling.

25. "But first must He suffer" &c. This note of suffering strikes somewhat strangely on the ear in the midst of the prophecy of the second great appearing. But it was needful. The disciples might have thought the Saviour was immediately about to reveal Himself as the conquering Judge. So He pauses a moment to remind them that suffering and humiliation must come first.

28. "The days of Lot." Our Lord here adds this example to that of the Flood, which He uses alone in the discourse on the Mount of Olives. St. Peter, doubtless remembering this discourse, uses the same two examples to show that "the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly "out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judg- "ment to be punished" (2 St. Pet. ii. 5—9.).

32. "Remember Lot's wife." A striking warning, found in this

A. D. 30.

33 [z] Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it.

34 [a] I tell you, in that night there shall be two *men* in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.

35 Two *women* shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

36 [2] Two *men* shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

37 And they answered and said unto Him, [b] Where, Lord? And He said unto them, Wheresoever the body *is*, thither will the eagles be gathered together.

[z] Matt. 10. 39. & 16. 25. Mark 8. 35. ch. 9. 24. John 12. 25.

[a] Matt. 24. 40, 41. 1 Thes. 4. 17.

[2] This 36th verse is wanting in most of the Greek copies.

[b] Job 39. 30. Matt. 24. 28.

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place alone, and giving great force to the previous command, which is also found in the great discourse on the mount of Olives. We can hardly doubt that Lot's wife sinned not alone by disobedience to the Angel's command, but also by lingering regrets for all the earthly goods she was forced to leave behind her.

33. "Whosoever shall seek" &c. This, which is a saying of our Lord repeated on several occasions (See on St. Matt. x. 39, and xvi. 25.), has a singular fitness here, as following the mention of Lot's wife, who, anxious to save her life—that is, what she valued as her life—lost it. And thus, as the Apocryphal writer says, the "standing pillar of salt" became "a monument of an unbelieving soul" (Wisd. x. 7.).

"Shall preserve it." The original word here is peculiar, and means 'shall bring it to birth.' He that loses his temporal life for Christ's sake, shall not only "preserve" his eternal life from destruction, but shall through the loss of the former actually enter into the possession and enjoyment of the latter. Thus the early Christian martyrs looked on the flaming faggots as chariots of fire to carry them to heaven, and the jaws of the hungry lions as the gates of Paradise. And thus too, in its degree, every sacrifice of earthly things for Christ's sake is a gain of heavenly.

34. "In one bed." A closer companionship than even that of labourers in the field and at the mill, as given in the later discourse on the Mount of Olives.

37. "Wheresoever the body is," &c. The disciples thought our Lord must be speaking of some judgment on some particular nation, wondering perhaps whether it could be their own (and indeed they were not greatly in error, for He might have spoken of the judgment hanging over the Jewish people in precisely the same terms, as we see from the great discourse already so often referred to, in which He speaks of the two judgments—that of the Jews and that of the world—in one). Thus they ask, in wondering awe, "Where, Lord?" The Lord answers them by that proverb, which He uses also in the other great discourse, and

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36. This verse is not found in many of the oldest copies of this Gospel, and may very easily have been written here by mistake by some copyist familiar with the words in St. Matthew xxiv.

CHAPTER XVIII.

3 *Of the importunate widow.* 9 *Of the Pharisee and the publican.* 15 *Children brought to Christ.* 18 *A ruler that would follow Christ, but is hindered by his riches.* 28 *The reward of them that leave all for His sake.* 31 *He foreseweth His death,* 35 *and restoreth a blind man to his sight.*

AND He spake a parable unto them *to this end,* that men ought [a] always to pray, and not to faint;

[a] ch. 11. 5. & 21. 36. Rom. 12. 12. Eph. 6. 18. Col. 4. 2. 1 Thess. 5. 17.

2 saying, There was [2] in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man:

3 and there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.

[2] Gr. *in a certain city.*

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which signifies that the judgments will fall wherever they are deserved, just as the vultures are sure to flock wherever there is a dead carcase. The fact that in the present discourse there is no allusion to the destruction of Jerusalem, the whole being concerned with the final coming of the Lord, makes it the more unlikely that the eagles have any reference in the other discourse to the Roman standards.

CHAPTER XVIII.

1—8. Parable of the Unjust Judge.

This Parable doubtless arose out of the discourse related in the last chapter, and was meant to encourage the Church in times of distress, but especially in the season of severest trials which is to come before the end. It is like the parable of the Friend at Midnight, both in its object, which is to set forth the power of persevering prayer, and in its way of teaching, which is by *contrast*,—the argument being, If a bad man will do this, how much more God (See on xi. 5.).

1. "**Always to pray.**" So St. Paul commands. "Pray without "ceasing" (1 Thess. v. 17. See also Eph. vi. 18.). Origen, an early writer, says the life of a Christian should be "one great continuous "prayer." This does not mean that we must be always on our knees engaged in the outward act of prayer. But that the soul must be always attuned to prayer,—always ready for prayer,—frequent in prayer, —making prayer its habit and as it were natural posture. The act of prayer is but the outward expression of an inward desire and longing. Where that desire and longing always is, there is prayer without ceasing.

"**Not to faint.**" That is, not to become weary, and faint-hearted.

2. "**Which feared not God,**" &c. "Not merely was there want-"ing in him the higher motive, the fear of God; but its poor and "miserable substitute, the respect for the opinion of the world, was "equally wanting" (*Abp. Trench.*).

3. "**A widow.**" Having no human arm to protect her, and so exposed to wrong and robbery.

"**Avenge me of mine adversary.**" This is not a petition for revenge, but simply asks for justice, 'Deliver me from mine enemy' —'Obtain justice for me.'

A.D. 30. 4 And he would not for a while: but afterward
he said within himself, Though I fear not God,
nor regard man;

b ch. 11. 8. 5 [b] yet because this widow troubleth me, I will
avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary
me.

6 And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust
judge saith.

c Rev. 6. 10. 7 And [c] shall not God avenge His own elect,
which cry day and night unto Him, though He
bear long with them?

d Heb. 10. 37. 2 Pet. 3. 8, 9. 8 I tell you [d] that He will avenge them speedily.

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4. "He would not." Probably the wrong-doer was great and powerful, or a friend of the judge.

"Though I fear not" &c. Observe how distinctly it is stated that the judge acted from no motive better than the purest selfishness. Even in his own thoughts he uses no pretence. And yet such a man is prevailed upon at last! Who then will doubt that prayer will prevail with a God of justice and mercy?

5. "She weary me." The Greek word translated "weary" is a very strong word, and might be fairly represented in English by 'worry' or 'plague me to death.' It is the exaggerated language of a selfish man whose temper is ruffled.

6. "Hear what the unjust judge saith." Here begins the explanation, or application, of the parable, probably after a short but solemn pause. To read this aright great force must be given to the word "*unjust*." The lesson is this, "Hear what the *unjust* judge saith: "and shall not God" (who is perfectly just and good) "avenge His "own elect?" 'If a man caring so little for right or wrong could be 'persuaded to do a justice by persevering asking, will persevering 'asking fail to persuade God who loves right and justice, and when 'they who ask are His own elect?'

7. "Avenge His own elect." 'Deliver His own chosen people.' God's "elect" are those whom He has chosen out of mankind to gather into His Church (See on St. Matt. xxiv. 22.). As the Jews were under the Old Covenant, so Christians are under the New, God's elect people. In the time of distress they "cry day and night unto Him", and He sometimes seems as though He heard not. Yet it is not so. "Sure "I am that the Lord will avenge the poor: and maintain the cause "of the helpless" (Ps. cxl. 12.).

"Though He bear long with them." This does not mean, 'though 'He bear long with their sins', but simply 'though He delay long with 'them'—'though He be slow in executing the vengeance.'

8. "Speedily." Yet not till after the *bearing long* of the last verse. God will not leave His people "a moment longer in the fire of affliction "than is needful, delivering them from it the instant that patience "has had its perfect work." "The relief, which to man's impatience "seems to tarry long, indeed arrives speedily; it could not, according "to the far-seeing and loving counsels of God, have arrived a moment "earlier" (*Abp. Trench.*).

Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth? A.D. 30.

9 ¶ And He spake this parable unto certain [e] which trusted in themselves [2] that they were righteous, and despised others:

[e] ch. 10. 29. & 16. 15.
[2] Or, *as being righteous.*

10 Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.

11 The Pharisee [f] stood and prayed thus with himself, [g] God, I thank Thee, that I am not as other

[f] Ps. 135. 2.
[g] Isai. 1. 15. & 58. 2. Rev. 3. 17.

Although in this parable the conduct of the judge and the widow's importunity are the points put forward for our instruction, yet, as the widow is manifestly God's Church (His "elect"), so we need not scruple to see in the "adversary" Satan himself—"your adversary "the devil" (1 St. Pet. v. 8.). For deliverance from his oppression the Church is crying day and night, for what else is the "Deliver us from "evil"—literally, 'from the evil one' (See on St. Matt. vi. 13.)? And as the elect on earth thus cry day and night, so do the spirits of the martyrs cry in Paradise, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou "not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth" (Rev. vi. 10.).

"Nevertheless" &c. This is a sorrowful ending to the promise of speedy deliverance. Christ foresees that, as the world grows old and His coming is delayed, faith in the promised deliverance will wax dim, and men will begin to "faint" instead of "praying always." Those who endure unto the end, stedfast in hope, unshaken in confidence, will be but few.

9—14. Parable of the Pharisee and the Publican.

9. **"Unto certain which trusted" &c.** These were not *Pharisees*, but certain among our Lord's own disciples, or perhaps more generally among those who listened to Him, who had in them the *spirit* of the Pharisees—a self-righteous pride.

10. **"The one a Pharisee," &c.** The Pharisee would doubtless most strictly and constantly observe the appointed hours of prayer. The publican, on the other hand, would very probably have neglected the duty altogether, and not have gone up to the Temple at all, had not his heart been stricken with true penitence.

11. **"The Pharisee stood."** Standing was the ordinary posture of prayer among the Jews (St. Matt. vi. 5.) The publican also stood (13.).

"God, I thank Thee," &c. This is boasting not thanksgiving. It is indeed a most just subject for thankfulness to have been kept by God's grace from grave and deadly sins. But in such thankfulness the sinner sees chiefly two things—the utter weakness and sinfulness of his own nature, and the mercy of God in preserving such a weak and sinful nature from great falls. This Pharisee saw nothing of the

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8. "*Faith.*" In the Original "the "Faith," that is, probably from the context such Faith as Sustains permanence in Prayer, notwithstanding any delay in an answer being given.

10. "*Pharisee.*" See on St. Matthew iii. 7.

"*Publican.*" See on St. Matthew v. 46.

A.D. 30. men *are*, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

12 I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

13 And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as *his* eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

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corruption of his own heart. He simply thought himself far better than other men, and with self-complacent pride thanked God for this —which in his heart he plainly looked upon as his own great merit.

Alford well points out how excellently the Church has set side by side with this parable (in the Epistle and Gospel for the 11th Sunday after Trinity) St. Paul's words in speaking of his own abundant labours:—"By the grace of God I am what I am" . . . "I laboured "more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God "which was with me" (1 Cor. xv. 10.).

"Extortioners." Men making their gains by exacting heavy interest upon money lent by them; or perhaps more generally, men making unjust gains.

"Or even as this publican." The wretched pride and scornfulness of the Pharisee here breaks out, and shows that, however his tongue might be thanking God, his heart was only boasting of his own excellencies.

12. "I fast twice in the week." This was a custom with the stricter Pharisees. It was not commanded in the Law. Had it been practised for the true end of humbling the soul in penitence, and subduing the rebelliousness of the flesh, it would have been well (See on St. Matt. vi. 16.). But with this man it was plainly a bare formality.

"I give tithes." Here too the thing in itself was right. It was the spirit which ruined it (See on St. Matt. xxiii. 23.). Pride turns good into evil. It is a sad thing if even our best deeds are used by Satan for our destruction. Yet it may be so. "Take heed", says Bishop Jeremy Taylor, "lest the devil take one of thine own branches "for a handle to the axe by which to cut down the tree."

13. "The publican," &c. This man stood "afar off"—that is, probably afar off from the Pharisee and other worshippers, not thinking himself worthy to approach. His down-cast eyes and his smiting upon his breast are no hypocritical pretence. He is not acting a part "to "be seen of men." These are but the natural outward expression of a heart deeply moved and humbled within. It is scarcely possible for a devout spirit to avoid expressing itself in devout action. If such a publican could be present in our service during the General Confession, we may be very sure he would kneel humbly on his knees, and utter with deep earnestness the words of penitent supplication. The careless indifference of posture and manner shown by many in our churches, if it avoids the hypocrisy of the Pharisee, certainly avoids no less the penitent humility of the Publican.

"God be merciful to me a sinner." "Literally, 'to me *the* sinful "'one'; for, as the other had singled himself out as the most eminent "of saints, or indeed as the one holy one in the world, so the publican "singles himself out as the chief of sinners, the man in whom all sins

14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified *rather* than the other: [h] for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. A.D. 30.

[h] Job 22. 29. Matt. 23. 12. ch. 14. 11. James 4. 6. 1 Pet. 5. 5, 6.

15 ¶ And they brought unto Him also infants, that He would touch them: but when *His* disciples saw *it*, they rebuked them.

16 But Jesus called them *unto Him*, and said, Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not: for [i] of such is the kingdom of God.

[i] 1 Cor. 14. 20. 1 Pet. 2. 2.

17 Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein.

18 ¶ And a certain ruler asked Him, saying,

"have met."—"Who at that moment when he is first truly convinced "of his sins thinks any other man's sins can be equal to his own?" (*Abp. Trench.*)

14. "Justified." Does this mean outwardly—that is, 'accepted and 'counted righteous before God', or inwardly—that is, 'with a *sense* of 'peace and acceptance'? Probably both; for, while the first would be certainly true, the expression *going down to his house* justified seems to imply the carrying home with him a *sense* of pardon and acceptance. The publican found the mercy he asked for, and went home feeling he had found it.

"Rather than the other." This does not mean '*More* justified than 'the other', for the Pharisee was not justified at all, but 'instead of the 'other.'

"Every one that exalteth" &c. The Pharisee was "abased" by the absence of any blessing from God; the Publican was "exalted" by the gift of pardon and peace (See on xiv. 11.). Thus was the last first, and the first last (See on St. Matt. xx. 16.).

15—17. Little children brought to Jesus.

St. Matt. xix. 13—15. St. Mark x. 13—16.

15. "Infants." Literally 'sucklings', showing the tender age of those brought, although the word is sometimes used of little children beyond the age of actual infancy.

16. "Called them." That is (as we learn from the Greek), the little children. Yet we need not of necessity argue from this that these little ones were old enough to understand and obey the invitation. If they were carried, the calling them might simply be a call to those who brought them to approach.

18—30. The rich young man, and discourse upon riches.

St. Matt. xix. 16—30. St. Mark x. 17—31.

18. "A certain ruler." St. Luke alone names the fact that this rich young man was a "ruler." Jairus is called by St. Matthew a

A.D. 30. Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

19 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou Me good? none *is* good, save one, *that is*, God.

k Exod. 20. 12, 16. Deut. 5. 16,—20. Rom. 13. 9. l Eph. 6. 2. Col. 3. 20.

20 Thou knowest the commandments, [k] Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, [l] Honour thy father and thy mother.

21 And he said, All these have I kept from my youth up.

m Matt. 6. 1 Tim. 6. 19.

22 Now when Jesus heard these things, He said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: [m] sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow Me.

23 And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich.

n Prov. 11. 28.

24 And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, He said, [n] How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

25 For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

26 And they that heard *it* said, Who then can be saved?

o Jer. 32. 17. Zech. 8. 6. ch. 1. 37.

27 And He said, [o] The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.

28 Then Peter said, Lo, we have left all, and followed Thee.

"ruler", whereas we find from St. Mark and St. Luke that he was a "ruler of the synagogue" (See on St. Mark v. 22.). So this rich young man may have been a "ruler of the synagogue." Indeed the civil power among the Jews was entirely in the hands of the Priests (so far as the Romans allowed its exercise at all), and there were no 'rulers' except such as had a religious office.

24. **"How hardly" &c.** If we understand by "enter into the kingdom of God" 'cast in their lot with Christ's people here below', how true is this saying! It was hard indeed for a rich Jew to sacrifice his wealth, friends, position, comfort, to do this. St. Paul did so, counting all these things "but dung" that he "might win Christ" (Phil. iii. 8.). The parallel to this in modern days would be for a rich man of the world to break through his old habits, give up his old friends, and brave the ridicule and dislike he would be sure to incur, in order to lead a holy life. This is hard indeed. And here we see one of the perils of riches. They too often bind a man with cords which it is very hard to break (See on xix. 2.).

29 And He said unto them, Verily I say unto you, [p] There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake,

A. D. 30.

[p] Deut. 33. 9.

30 [q] who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.

[q] Job 42. 10.

31 ¶ [r] Then He took *unto Him* the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things [s] that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished.

A. D. 30.

[r] Matt. 16. 21. & 17. 22.

[s] Ps. 22. Isai. 53.

32 For [t] He shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on:

[t] Matt. 27. 2. ch. 23. 1. John 18. 28. Acts 3. 13.

33 and they shall scourge *Him*, and put Him to death: and the third day He shall rise again.

34 [u] And they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.

[u] Mark 9. 32. ch. 2. 50. & 9. 45. John 10. 6. & 12. 16.

35 ¶ And it came to pass, that as He was come nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the way side begging:

36 and hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant.

31—34. Our Lord foretells His sufferings.

St. Matt. xx. 17—19. St. Mark x. 32—34.

31. "**By the prophets.**" As, for instance, by David (in Ps. xxii.), and by Isaiah (in ch. liii.).

34. "**They understood not.**" Our Lord had at least twice before solemnly announced His approaching sufferings and death, but it was long before even the Apostles themselves could be content to give up their dreams of an earthly kingdom and of earthly glory. It was in this ignorant spirit that St. Peter, when Jesus foretold His sufferings, "began to rebuke Him, saying, Be it far from Thee, Lord: this shall "not be unto Thee" (St. Matt. xvi. 22.).

35—43. Healing of a blind man near Jericho.

St. Matt. xx. 29—34. St. Mark x. 46—52.

35. "**A certain blind man.**" Known as "blind Bartimæus" (St. Mark.). From St. Matthew we learn that another blind man was with him.

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35. "*As He was come nigh*" *&c.* It will be remembered that St. Matthew and St. Mark record this miracle as happening as He *departed* from Jericho. This little difficulty is discussed in St. Matthew.

A.D. 30. 37 And they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.

38 And he cried, saying, Jesus, *Thou* Son of David, have mercy on me.

39 And they which went before rebuked him, that he should hold his peace: but he cried so much the more, *Thou* Son of David, have mercy on me.

40 And Jesus stood, and commanded him to be brought unto Him: and when he was come near, He asked him,

41 saying, What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? And he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight.

42 And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight:
x ch. 17. 19. x thy faith hath saved thee.

43 And immediately he received his sight, and
y ch. 5. 26. Acts 4. 21. & 11. 18. followed Him, y glorifying God: and all the people, when they saw *it*, gave praise unto God.

CHAPTER XIX.

1 *Of Zacchæus a publican.* 11 *The ten pieces of money.* 28 *Christ rideth into Jerusalem with triumph:* 41 *weepeth over it:* 45 *driveth the buyers and sellers out of the temple:* 47 *teaching daily in it. The rulers would have destroyed Him, but for fear of the people.*

AND *Jesus* entered and passed through Jericho.

2 And, behold, *there was* a man named Zacchæus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich.

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36. "**He asked what it meant.**" That is, the tramp and noise of the passing multitude. This is plainly the first time the blind man heard of our Lord's arrival. He then probably rose up and joined in the crowd, crying on Jesus to have mercy on him.

39. "**They which went before.**" The blind man fell in at the back of the multitude, and those in front tried to silence him.

43. "**Glorifying God.**" St. Luke alone mentions this, as well as the effect on the people who saw the miracle. Our Lord appeals to His miracles as witnessing that He came from God (St. John v. 36. x. 25, 38.), and we here see how convincing was this witness to those whose hearts were not blinded by prejudice and obstinacy (See v. 26. xvii. 15. Acts iii. 8—10.).

CHAPTER XIX.

1—10. Zacchæus the publican.

2. "**Chief among the publicans.**" Zacchæus had probably contracted with the Roman government for the taxes of a large and rich

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1. "*Through Jericho.*" Upon the time of this visit to Jericho see *Notes* on St. Mark x. 17 and 46.

3 And he sought to see Jesus who He was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature. A. D. 30.

4 And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycomore tree to see Him: for He was to pass that *way*.

5 And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchæus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house.

6 And he made haste, and came down, and received Him joyfully.

7 And when they saw *it*, they all murmured,

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district, for which he would pay a fixed sum, making what he could, and having other publicans as collectors under him. In the same way with us some persons make their living by taking a number of turnpike gates at a fixed rental, putting in collectors, and making what they can by the tolls. The publicans had however unusual opportunities of cheating the people, and exacting more than was due (See on St. Matt. v. 46.).

"**He was rich.**" Doubtless from the profits—partly perhaps the unjust profits—of his calling. The calling and conversion of Zacchæus are a practical comment on our Lord's words concerning the difficulty of a rich man entering into the kingdom of God. "The things which "are impossible with men are possible with God" (xviii. 27.).

3. "**He sought to see Jesus.**" There is nothing in these words showing anything more than idle curiosity, but certainly such a motive would never have won for him any blessing. We may be sure his desire to see Jesus arose from some better and nobler feeling. He had doubtless heard much of Christ, and was quite prepared to believe in Him.

"**Could not for the press.**" How often does the thronging press of the world prevent our seeing Jesus.

4. "**A sycomore tree.**" Not the same as our sycamore, but a kind of fig—a much larger and handsomer tree than the common fig, but with a very inferior fruit. Neither these sycomores, nor palms (for which it was once so famous), now grow in the neighbourhood of Jericho. We can hardly doubt that in this conduct Zacchæus exposed himself to the ridicule and jesting of the people, who would not be likely to spare a publican (See on xviii. 24.).

5. "**Zacchæus, make haste,**" &c. Jesus invites Himself to visit those who dare not for their unworthiness invite Him. The house of Zacchæus was probably a short distance outside Jericho on the road towards Jerusalem (See 28.). We are not told how long our Lord abode in the house, but it seems that he rested there at any rate for some part of the day, if not for the night, as some suppose (But see on 28.). How high an honour to have Christ for our guest! Yet we may all do so, if we will.

7. "**They all murmured.**" Not the disciples, but the Jews—especially the Scribes and Pharisees—who saw it. So they also mur-

A.D. 30. saying, [a] That He was gone to be guest with a
a Matt. 9. 11. ch. 5. 30. man that is a sinner.

8 And Zacchæus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the
b ch. 3. 14. poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man
c Ex. 22. 1. 1 Sam. 12. 3. 2 Sam. 12. 6. by [b] false accusation, [c] I restore *him* fourfold.

d Rom. 4. 11, 12, 16. Gal. 3. 7. 9 And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as [d] he also is
e ch. 13. 16. [e] a son of Abraham.

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mured when Jesus went to the house of Matthew the publican (See St. Matt. ix. 11.).

"A sinner." So he would be regarded from his calling alone—always in the Jewish mind connected with extortion and avarice. It seems probable that this man had been less of a "sinner" in these ways than others of his trade.

8. "Behold, Lord," &c. It is not likely that Zacchæus would stand up and utter this saying without something having been said by our Lord to call it forth, and so it is well remarked that "We are left "by St. Luke to judge of our Lord's sermon at the table of Zacchæus "by its effects" (*Wordsworth.*). Zacchæus is not here describing what had been, and was, his usual practice, else his words would be more of a Pharisaic boast, than of a penitent confession. He is making a solemn vow and resolution for the time to come. It is as though he said, 'I hereby dedicate half my goods to the poor, and promise to 'restore fourfold in every case where I have taken wrongfully from any 'man.' This restoration of fourfold was what the Law of Moses required in the case of actual theft (Exod. xxii. 1, 9.), so that Zacchæus is a stern judge towards himself. The "false accusation" to which he makes confession was probably false accusation of persons for not paying their taxes, by which means they might be driven to pay twice over, or to bribe the publican to take no steps against them, knowing too well that the Roman government would probably believe the publican in his false witness against them. The words translated, "If I have "taken" may be equally well translated, 'Whatsoever I have taken'. They do not of necessity imply any doubt that he had done so, though there is no reason to suppose he had largely practised this vile extortion. Observe how the newly awakened faith of Zacchæus at once showed itself in works, and how the sincerity of his repentance was proved by his bringing forth fruits meet for repentance. Observe also how his first act is to strike a deadly blow at his besetting sin.

9. "Jesus said unto him." The words were meant for Zacchæus, yet as others also were meant to hear them, they are, in their form, spoken rather *of* him than *to* him.

"This day" &c. A memorable day for the publican! Salvation was come to his house: but he was waiting with the door open, or it might have passed by. Jesus says, "Behold, I stand at the door, "and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will "come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me" (Rev. iii. 20.).

"A son of Abraham." Both by natural descent, and by spiritual

10 [f]For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost. A.D. 30.

[f] Matt. 18. 11. See Matt. 10. 6. & 15. 24.

11 ¶ And as they heard these things, He added and spake a parable, because He was nigh to Jerusalem, and because [g]they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.

[g] Acts 1. 6.

12 [h]He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.

[h] Matt. 25. 14. Mark 13. 34.

13 And he called his ten servants, and delivered

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likeness. Though the Scribes and Pharisees scorned the publican as one beneath their notice, yet Jesus reminds them that he too is of the chosen race, and has the same privileges with themselves; and moreover has proved himself worthy of those privileges by that faith, by which he is doubly a son of Abraham, for "they which be of faith "are blessed with faithful Abraham" (Gal. iii. 9.).

10. **"That which was lost."** Especially when that was one of God's chosen nation—a "son of Abraham", who by sin had forfeited his calling and privileges.

11—27. Parable of the Pounds.

11. **"He added and spake."** Plainly still in the house of Zacchæus.

"Because He was nigh" &c. Jericho was nearly 17 miles from Jerusalem. The disciples, still holding very imperfect views of our Lord's office and work upon earth, expected His present journey to Jerusalem to end in the triumphant setting up of His kingdom. They were slow in learning that His road to royal glory lay through Calvary. His parable is to show that as yet there is to be no open display of His kingdom. He must Himself go away in order to receive His Kingly power, while His subjects must stay in lowly obedience fulfilling the work He sets them to do.

12. **"A certain nobleman."** This, of course, is Christ Himself, noble indeed, whether we think of His heavenly nature and origin, or of His earthly descent from Abraham and David.

"Went into a far country" &c. This refers to our Lord's departure at His Ascension (Comp. xx. 9. and St. Matt. xxv. 14.). He went to receive the Kingly power and authority by which He even now reigns over His Church. He was King *of right* before. In His exaltation to the Right Hand of God He was *enthroned*, and *proclaimed* as King. This was a custom very familiar to the Jews, whose kings had to travel to Rome to be confirmed in their throne. Thus Archelaus, son of Herod the Great, went to Rome on his father's death to be confirmed in his kingdom; and it is remarkable that, when he did so, the Jews sent to Rome to beg he might not be their king, though their petition was not noticed by the Roman emperor.

13. **"His ten servants."** These are doubtless Christ's disciples, to each of whom He entrusts a work to do during His absence.

11—27. For the differences between this Parable and that of the Talents, as well as on the points common to both, see on St. Matt. xxv. 14—30.

A.D. 30. them ten [2] pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.

[2] *Mina*, here translated a pound, is twelve ounces and an half: which according to five shillings the ounce is three pounds two shillings and sixpence.

14 [i] But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this *man* to reign over us.

15 And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the [3] money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading.

[i] John 1. 11.

[3] Gr. *silver*, and so ver. 23.

16 Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds.

17 And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been [k] faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.

[k] Matt. 25. 21. ch. 16. 10.

18 And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds.

"Pounds." The pound here spoken of was the sixtieth part of a talent (See on St. Matt. xviii. 24.), and worth about £3. of our money. The pounds in this parable have the same spiritual meaning as the talents in the parable of the Talents. Each however suits best the occasion for its use, the larger sum—the talent—being used in the parable addressed to the Apostles, to whom were entrusted the highest gifts, and the smaller sum—the pound—being used in the present parable, which is spoken more generally of all Christians.

"Occupy." That is, use in trading—employ profitably. There is not one who has not some gifts of body, mind, or possession, which he is bound to employ in his Master's service.

14. "His citizens." The Jewish people—Christ's fellow-citizens by earthly race and country, and the most natural subjects of His kingdom.

"Sent a message" &c. The Jews not only hated Jesus while on earth, but after His Ascension wilfully rejected Him, persecuting His servants and blaspheming His holy Name. It has been well pointed out that on two occasions this rejection of Christ as their King was distinctly declared by the Jews: once when they cried, "We have "no king but Cæsar" (St. John xix. 15.), and again when they said, "Write not, the King of the Jews" (St. John xix. 21.).

15. "When he was returned," &c. This is a picture of the judgment of the great day, resembling in its main features that in the parable of the Talents.

16. "Thy pound." Not '*My* pound'—For "what hast thou that "thou didst not receive?" (1 Cor. iv. 7.).

17. "Authority over ten cities." This was a customary reward bestowed by great Eastern kings upon their favourites, who ruled over, and received the revenues from, such cities as the king allotted to them. It implies, in its spiritual meaning, high honour and glory.

19 And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities. A.D. 30.

20 And another came, saying, Lord, behold, *here is* thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin:

21 [l] for I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow. [l] Matt. 25. 24.

22 And he saith unto him, [m] Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, *thou* wicked servant. [n] Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow: [m] 2 Sam. 1. 16. Job 15. 16. Matt. 12. 37. [n] Matt. 25. 26.

23 wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury?

24 And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give *it* to him that hath ten pounds.

25 (And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.)

26 For I say unto you, [o] That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him. [o] Matt. 13. 12. & 25. 29. Mark 4. 25. ch. 8. 18.

27 But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay *them* before me.

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19. "**Over five cities.**" We must not fail to notice this plain revelation of differences of glory in heaven.

20. "**In a napkin.**" For cleanliness and safety. This man, like the servant who buried the talent, made the vain attempt to keep his master's money safe, while he neglected to turn it to profit. This may perhaps be done with a piece of gold. It cannot be done with that which the piece of gold signifies. If God's gifts to us are not used in His service, they are certainly wasted and lost.

25. "**Lord, he hath ten pounds.**" In reading this the force should be laid upon the word "hath." It is the remark of the other servants or the by-standers, who wonder that the pound should be given to one who has already got so much. Only three out of the ten servants are named, but we may suppose these to represent the rest, the other seven being more or less faithful, and receiving accordingly.

27. "**Slay *them* before me.**" This destruction of the king's enemies plainly foreshadows the destruction of Jerusalem, but also pictures to us the terrible doom of all who refuse to have Christ to reign over them at the last day.

A. D. 30.
28 ¶ And when He had thus spoken, [p] He went
[p] Mark 10. 32. before, ascending up to Jerusalem.

29 And it came to pass, when He was come nigh to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount called *the mount* of Olives, He sent two of His disciples,

30 saying, Go ye into the village over against *you;* in the which at your entering ye shall find a colt tied, whereon yet never man sat: loose him, and bring *him hither.*

31 And if any man ask you, Why do ye loose *him?* thus shall ye say unto him, Because the Lord hath need of him.

32 And they that were sent went their way, and found even as He had said unto them.

33 And as they were loosing the colt, the owners thereof said unto them, Why loose ye the colt?

34 And they said, The Lord hath need of him.

[q] 2 Kings 9. 13.
35 And they brought him to Jesus: [q] and they cast their garments upon the colt, and they set Jesus thereon.

36 And as He went, they spread their clothes in the way.

37 And when He was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole

28—40. The triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

St. Matt. xxi. 1—11. St. Mark xi. 1—11. St. John xii. 12—19.

28. "**When He had thus spoken.**" It would seem from these words most probable that our Lord did not remain all night in the house of Zacchæus (See on 5.), though we need not press them into meaning that He set out immediately after speaking the foregoing parable. The meaning may simply be, After this parable, (which was spoken with a special view to His approach to Jerusalem (See 11.),) He continued His journey thither.

"**Ascending up.**" The ancients, like ourselves, always spoke of going up to, and down from, the capital city in any country, without any reference to its being higher in actual position. Our Lord's approach was now public and open (See on St. Mark x. 32.).

29. "**Bethphage and Bethany.**" The coupling of these two places together here and in St. Mark would lead to the conclusion that Bethphage, the site of which is unknown, was very near Bethany.

30. "**The village.**" Bethphage, for that alone is named by St. Matthew.

37. "**At the descent**" &c. Where the road, having passed up and over the ridge of the Mount of Olives, as it rounds its southern shoulder, begins to descend towards Jerusalem. "At this point the "first view is caught of the south-eastern corner of the city. The

multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen; A.D. 30.

38 saying, [t] **Blessed** *be* **the King that cometh in the name of the Lord:** [u] peace in heaven, and glory in the highest. [t] ch. 13. 35. [u] ch. 2. 14. Eph. 2. 14. Ps. 118. 26.

39 And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto Him, Master, rebuke Thy disciples.

40 And He answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, [x] the stones would immediately cry out. [x] Hab. 2. 11.

41 ¶ And when He was come near, He beheld the city, and [y] wept over it, [y] John 11. 35.

"Temple and the more northern portions are hid by the slope of "Olivet on the right" (*Stanley.*). It was here—as Jerusalem came partly into sight—that the shout of triumphant joy broke forth loudly from the multitude.

"Mighty works." Especially the raising of Lazarus, which had but just taken place, though not related except by St. John (See St. John xii. 17, 18.). Bartimæus had also followed in the company (xviii. 43.), and doubtless there were many others there themselves living witnesses to Christ's miraculous power.

38. "**Blessed** *be* **the King.**" If some had truer thoughts of their mysterious Master, yet we cannot doubt that most of those who thus rejoiced "thought that the kingdom of God should immediately ap-"pear" (11.).

"**Peace in heaven.**" This is not given in the other Gospels. It is probably to be understood as meaning, 'There is peace for man in 'heaven', or 'Heaven is at peace with man.' It is remarkable that St. Luke, writing for Gentile readers, omits the "Hosanna", which was a word they would not understand, rendering it by "glory."

39. "**Master, rebuke Thy disciples.**" These Pharisees were offended at the high honour paid to Christ, whose Divine authority they denied, as well as jealous of His popularity. It was the same when they heard next day the children crying "Hosanna" in the temple (See St. Matt. xxi. 15, 16.).

40. "**The stones**" &c. This is a sort of proverb, meaning that nothing could silence the cries of triumphant joy. The language is probably taken from that of the prophet Habakkuk (ii. 11.), "The "stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall "answer it." Most literally did the rocks and stones bear their witness to Christ's Royal power, when the rocks were rent at His Crucifixion, and the mighty stones of the temple cast down, so that not one was left upon another (44.), when He came to take vengeance upon His guilty people. (See on St. Matt. xxiv. 2, 4.).

41—44. Jesus weeping over Jerusalem.

41. "**Wept over it.**" Jesus' thoughts were not with the shouts

A.D. 30. 42 saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things *which belong* unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.

z Isai. 29. 3, 4. Jer. 6. 3, 6. ch. 21. 20. a 1 Kings 9. 7, 8. Mic. 3. 12. b Matt. 24. 2. Mark 13. 2. ch. 21. 6. c Dan. 9. 24. ch. 1. 68, 78. 1 Pet. 2. 12.

43 For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall [z] cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side,

44 and [a] shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and [b] they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; [c] because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.

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of the multitude. His heart was far away. After the first brief glimpse of the city from the beginning of the descent (See on 37.) the road descends again a little way, "and the city is again lost sight of behind "the ridge of Olivet. A few moments, and the path mounts again: "it climbs a rugged ascent; it reaches a ledge of smooth rock: and "in an instant the whole city bursts into view." "It is hardly possible "to doubt that this rise and turn of the road, this rocky ledge, was "the exact spot where the multitude paused again, and where 'He "'beheld the city, and wept over it'." (*Stanley.*). Surely few travellers could stand unmoved on this very spot:—the hills standing round about unchanged; the very road,—with the olives on the slopes, and stunted bushes, and here and there a wild fig-tree, by the side,—little altered; and the holy city itself, "beautiful for situation, the joy of the "whole earth" (Ps. xlviii. 2.),—*that* however no longer the same—bursting on the view. It was there that in the midst of the Hosannas of the multitude Jesus paused and wept.

42. "If thou hadst known." That is, 'Oh! that thou had t 'known.'

"In this thy day." The day of grace, while yet the Saviour was there to receive and pardon,—"the day of thy visitation" (44.).

"The things which belong unto thy peace." "It is as if He "had said, 'Thou art called Jerusalem' (which means, 'They shall "'see peace'); 'Oh that thou wert Jerusalem in truth, and hadst "'known the things which make for thy peace; but now are they "'hid from thine eyes'." (*P. Young.*).

43. "Thine enemies" &c. This is an exact prediction of that which actually occurred in the siege of Jerusalem. (For some particulars of the siege see on St. Matt. xxiv. 21.) It has been well pointed out that, whereas in the weeping Jesus shows Himself to be truly Man, in the prophecy He shows Himself to be truly God.

44. "The time of thy visitation." The day when God had visited His people with the offers of grace and salvation. "He came unto "His own, and His own received Him not" (St. John i. 11.). Let us not read this touching passage, and think only of Jerusalem. There is the spiritual Jerusalem, Christ's own Church and people. Has He no need to utter a like lament over that? There are our own hearts. Do *we* know the things which belong unto our peace? Do *we* know the time of our visitation? God grant the day come not, when it may be said of us, "But now they are hid from thine eyes"!

45 ¶ And He went into the temple, and began A.D. 30.
to cast out them that sold therein, and them that
bought;
46 saying unto them, It is written, **My house
is the house of prayer:** but [d] ye have made it a [d] Jer. 7. 11.
den of thieves. Is. 56. 7.

47 ¶ And He taught daily in the temple. But
[e] the chief priests and the scribes and the chief of [e] Mark 11. 18.
the people sought to destroy Him, John 7. 19. & 8. 37.
48 and could not find what they might do:
for all the people [2] were very attentive to hear [2] Or, *hanged on him,* Acts 16. 14.
Him.

CHAPTER XX.

1 *Christ avoucheth His authority by a question of John's baptism.* 9 *The parable of the vineyard.* 19 *Of giving tribute to Cæsar.* 27 *He convinceth the Sadducees that denied the resurrection.* 41 *How Christ is the Son of David.* 45 *He warneth His disciples to beware of the scribes.*

45, 46. Cleansing of the Temple.

St. Matt. xxi. 1, 12, 13. St. Mark xi. 15—18.

Compare the first cleansing of the Temple, St. John ii. 13—17.

45. "And He went" &c. It appears (See *Note* on St. Matt. xxi. 1.) that our Lord only went into the Temple and looked round about upon all things there on the day of His triumphal entry—Palm-Sunday, and that it was the next day when the event here related took place.

47, 48. Christ's daily teaching in the Temple during the Holy-Week, with its results.

47. "He taught daily in the temple." This is a brief account of the way in which the few days between Palm-Sunday and Good Friday were passed. By night He retired from the city, the first night to Bethany (St. Mark xi. 11.), and after that probably only to the Mount of Olives (See xxi. 37.): spending the hours of the night in prayer.

48. "Very attentive to hear Him." The common people always heard Him gladly (St. Mark xii. 37.). We can hardly suppose that it was these very people who within so few days were clamouring, "Crucify Him, Crucify Him" (xxiii. 21.). Some may have been thus fickle, but we can hardly doubt that there must have been many of those who loved to listen to His teaching who saw with grief His condemnation and death, not having learnt to look for life through that death.

A. D. 30. AND it came to pass, *that* on one of those days, as He taught the people in the temple, and preached the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes came upon *Him* with the elders,

[a] Acts 4. 7. & 7. 27. 2 and spake unto Him, saying, Tell us, [a] by what authority doest Thou these things? or who is he that gave Thee this authority?

3 And He answered and said unto them, I will also ask you one thing; and answer Me:

4 The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?

5 And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; He will say, Why then believed ye him not?

6 But and if we say, Of men; all the people [b] Matt. 14. 5. ch. 7. 29. will stone us: [b] for they be persuaded that John was a prophet.

7 And they answered, that they could not tell whence *it was*.

8 And Jesus said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

9 ¶ Then began He to speak to the people this parable; A certain man planted a vineyard, and

CHAPTER XX.

1—8. Our Lord questioned as to His authority.

St. Matt. xxi. 23—27. St. Mark xi. 27—33.

1. "One of those days." During the Holy Week, probably on the Tuesday, the day after the driving of the buyers and sellers out of the Temple, to which act the question as to our Lord's authority doubtless in a great measure applies.

"Preached the gospel." This expression need not be limited to the preaching of the central doctrine of the Atonement (See on viii. 1.). All our Lord's gracious invitations, all His merciful warnings, all His holy teachings, are "*the Gospel*", but only so because leading men to Him, in whom they may find life and salvation.

6. "All the people will stone us." This fear reveals to us how little sympathy there was between the rulers and the people of the Jews. The latter accepted St. John the Baptist's teaching heartily, while the former "believed him not" (See St. Matt. xxi. 32.): the latter were "very attentive to hear" our Lord, while the former "sought to destroy Him" (xix. 47, 48.).

9. "*Then began He,*" But, as we learn from St. Matthew, after first speaking the parable of the Two Sons.

let it forth to husbandmen, and went into a far country for a long time. A.D. 30.

10 And at the season he sent a servant to the husbandmen, that they should give him of the fruit of the vineyard: but the husbandmen beat him, and sent *him* away empty.

11 And again he sent another servant: and they beat him also, and entreated *him* shamefully, and sent *him* away empty.

12 And again he sent a third: and they wounded him also, and cast *him* out.

13 Then said the lord of the vineyard, What shall I do? I will send my beloved son: it may be they will reverence *him* when they see him.

14 But when the husbandmen saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, This is the heir: come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be our's.

15 So they cast him out of the vineyard, and killed *him*. What therefore shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them?

16 He shall come and destroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to others. And when they heard *it*, they said, God forbid.

17 And He beheld them, and said, What is this then that is written, **The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner?** Ps. 118. 22.

18 Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall

9—19. Parable of the wicked husbandmen.

St. Matt. xxi. 33—46. St. Mark xii. 1—12.

9. "For a long time." That is, during that long period under the old covenant, in which God seemed not to visit His people with His presence as He had done in the wilderness.

16. "God forbid." Those who exclaimed this plainly saw something of our Lord's meaning. It was the dread of the election of others into their place as God's chosen people which drew forth the words.

17. "He beheld them." Doubtless with a look of sorrowful reproach (See on St. Matt. xix. 26.). We learn from St. Matthew that, after the words concerning the "Stone which the builders rejected", our Lord plainly declared the meaning of His parable to be, as some of His hearers had already gathered, the rejection of the Jews, and the call of the Gentiles.

A. D. 30. be broken; but [c] on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.

[c] Dan. 2. 34, 35

19 And the chief priests and the scribes the same hour sought to lay hands on Him; and they feared the people: for they perceived that He had spoken this parable against them.

20 ¶ And they watched *Him*, and sent forth spies, which should feign themselves just men, that they might take hold of His words, that so they might deliver Him unto the power and authority of the governor.

21 And they asked Him, saying, Master, we know that Thou sayest and teachest rightly, neither acceptest Thou the person *of any*, but teachest the way of God [2] truly:

[2] Or, *of a truth.*

22 Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Cæsar, or no?

23 But He perceived their craftiness, and said unto them, Why tempt ye Me?

[3] See Matt. 18. 28.

24 Shew Me a [3] penny. Whose image and superscription hath it? They answered and said, Cæsar's.

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19. "Against them." As being the leaders and rulers of the people, to whom had been specially entrusted the care of God's vineyard. Though St. Luke speaks of this parable as spoken "to the people" (9.), yet it plainly refers mainly to the "Chief Priests and Scribes", as did the Parable of the "Two Sons" which preceded it.

20—26. Question as to paying tribute to Cæsar.

St. Matt. xxii. 15—22. St. Mark xii. 13—17.

20. "They might deliver Him" &c. St. Luke states their object more clearly than the other Evangelists. Their great desire was to find some charge which they could bring against our Lord before the Roman governor.

24. "Whose image." We are God's coinage. We belong to Him. Yet the corruption of our nature has well-nigh effaced His "image "and superscription" in us. But God would restore to us that which we have lost. One great object of the mystery of Christ's holy Incarnation is that man, by becoming like Christ, may become like God; for Christ is the "*image* of the invisible God" (Col. i. 15.). To this end God has engraven upon us His "superscription" anew, in that we were signed and marked as His in our Baptism. That "super-"scription" now stands out sharp and clear, whether we choose to read and acknowledge it or no. It is, "In the Name of the Father, "and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost". But the "image" is not at the same time stamped out anew. That is the work of sanctifying grace. God's *character* (which word properly signifies the stamp on

25 And He said unto them, Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which be Cæsar's, and unto God the things which be God's. A.D. 30.

26 And they could not take hold of His words before the people: and they marvelled at His answer, and held their peace.

27 ¶ Then came to *Him* certain of the Sadducees, [d] which deny that there is any resurrection: [d] Acts 23. 6, 8. and they asked Him,

28 saying, Master, [e] Moses wrote unto us, If any man's brother die, having a wife, and he die without children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. [e] Deut. 25. 5.

29 There were therefore seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and died without children.

30 And the second took her to wife, and he died childless.

31 And the third took her; and in like manner the seven also: and they left no children, and died.

32 Last of all the woman died also.

33 Therefore in the resurrection whose wife of them is she? for seven had her to wife.

34 And Jesus answering said unto them, The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage:

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a coin) ought to come out continually with more and more clearness in each baptized Christian. Yet how many are daily deepening and sharpening in themselves the character, not of God, but of Satan. Observe, the stamp on the coin shows to whom it belongs. And the day is coming when each coin will be rendered to him whose mark is on it.

26. "Before the people." No; because the people had heard His wise answer, and had witnessed the defeat of His crafty questioners, in which they would doubtless rejoice. But so determined were our Lord's enemies, and so unscrupulous, that, when they had not the fear of the people before them, they actually but a few days after this conversation accused Jesus before Pilate of "forbidding to give tribute "to Cæsar" (xxiii. 2.)!

27—40. Reply to the Sadducees concerning the Resurrection.

St. Matt. xxii. 23—33. St. Mark xii. 18—27.

34. "The children of this world." Not used in a bad sense, but (just as the word "earthy" is in 1 Cor. xv. 47—49.) of all who

A. D. 30. 35 but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage:

f 1 Cor. 15. 42, 49, 52. 1 John 3. 2. g Rom. 8. 23. 36 neither can they die any more: for [f] they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, [g] being the children of the resurrection.

37 Now that the dead are raised, even Moses

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live in this present life on earth. For such marriage is a holy ordinance of God.

35. "**Accounted worthy.**" For judgment shall be "according to "our works"; yet not really "*worthy*," for this none can be in themselves. "They that have done good" shall be "accounted worthy" through the merits of their Redeemer and the mercy of their God.

"**That world, and the resurrection.**" By "that world" is plainly meant the new world after the resurrection. Our Lord says nothing here of the state between death and resurrection. That state being purely spiritual, the question of marriage would not apply to it. It was as to the *bodily* existence of the dead after resurrection that the Sadducees asked their mocking question, and it is as to this state of existence that our Lord speaks in His answer. It is remarkable that our Lord here speaks as though only the *good* should rise, and other passages of Scripture describing the resurrection of the last day agree with our Lord's language in this. St. Paul (both in 1 Cor. xv. and in 1 Thess. iv.) speaks only of the resurrection of the just. It is plain from other places (See Rev. xx. 11—15.) that the wicked as well as the good will rise and appear with their bodies before Christ's judgment-seat. So when we meet with passages speaking as if only the good would rise, we must suppose that the resurrection of the good was the one fact thought of, shutting out, as it were, by its glory and blessedness the remembrance of the wicked.

36. "**Neither can they die.**" This is brought in perhaps as a reason why marriage, which is for the continuance of a race which is subject to death, is no more needful,

"**Equal unto the angels.**" This is not spoken of power, or glory, or dignity, but of their state of existence and of their immortality. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be" (1 St. John iii. 2.), but, as we know that we shall be like Christ in "that world", so we also know that in some ways we shall also be "equal unto the "angels." But, if we would be "accounted worthy to obtain that "world," then must we here in this world strive to copy Christ's example, and to do God's will as the Angels do in heaven.

"**The children of God.**" This expression is here used in an unusual and exalted sense, not of earth but of heaven. As we are made "children of God" in privilege, when first called and adopted into His family in Baptism; and as we are "children of God" in character and reality when loving God in the spirit of adoption; so are we in the highest sense "children of God" when taken at the resurrection into His redeemed and glorified family above.

shewed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord **the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.** Ex. 3. 6, 16. A.D. 30.

38 For He is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for [h] all live unto Him. [h] Rom. 6. 10, 11.

39 Then certain of the scribes answering said, Master, Thou hast well said.

40 And after that they durst not ask Him any *question at all.*

41 ¶ And He said unto them, How say they that Christ is David's Son?

42 And David himself saith in the book of Psalms, [i] **The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand,** [i] Acts 2. 34.

43 **till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool.** Ps. 110. 1.

44 David therefore calleth Him Lord, how is He then his Son?

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37. "**At the bush.**" This probably means 'in the passage concerning the burning bush.'

"**When he calleth**" &c. That is, 'when he *spoke of* the Lord 'as the God of Abraham,' &c. Moses so "called" Him, because he wrote the history in which He is called by this title; but in truth it was God who called Himself by it. Observe how this title of God is referred to in the Epistle to the Hebrews. The patriarchs, Abraham Isaac and Jacob, are there spoken of as dying in faith, confessing themselves to be "strangers and pilgrims on the earth", and declaring that they sought and desired "a better country, that is, an heavenly. "Wherefore," continues the Epistle, "God is not ashamed *to be called* "*their God*, for He hath prepared for them a city" (Hebr. xi. 16.). This "city" is plainly the home of their *resurrection* life, not of their disembodied spirits, and therefore the title of God, linked as it is here, with the hope of the patriarchs, is a pledge of their resurrection.

39. "**Master, Thou hast well said.**" This witness to Christ's wisdom, borne by the Scribes who were no willing witnesses, is only recorded by St. Luke, though St. Mark mentions that one of the Scribes perceived that He had answered well (xii. 28.).

41—44. Christ's question concerning Himself.

St. Matt. xxii. 41—46. St. Mark xii. 35—37.

41. "**And He said**" &c. This followed after the Lawyer's question as to the first and greatest commandment, recorded in this place by St. Matthew and St. Mark, but not by St. Luke.

A.D. 30. 45 ¶ [k] Then in the audience of all the people
[k] Matt. 23. 1. He said unto His disciples,

46 Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk
[l] ch. 11. 43. in long robes, and [l] love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts;

47 which devour widows' houses, and for a shew make long prayers: the same shall receive greater damnation.

CHAPTER XXI.

1 *Christ commendeth the poor widow.* 5 *He foretelleth the destruction of the temple, and of the city Jerusalem:* 25 *the signs also which shall be before the last day.* 34 *He exhorteth them to be watchful.*

AND He looked up, and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury.

2 And He saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites.

[a] 2 Cor. 8. 12. 3 And He said, Of a truth I say unto you, [a] that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all:

4 for all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had.

45—47. The Scribes condemned.

St. Matt. xxiii. 1, *Note.* 5—7, 14. St. Mark xii. 38—40. Compare xi. 37—54.

47. "Greater damnation." Greater for their high professions. Of two men, whose hearts are equally far from God, that one will receive the severest sentence who has added to his other sin the hateful sin of hypocrisy. Better an open sinner than a pretended saint.

CHAPTER XXI.

1—4. The Widow's Mite.

St. Mark xii. 41—44.

1. "Looked up." From where He sat, "over against the treasury." He had been speaking to those close around Him: He now looks up from them and marks the people putting their offerings into the treasury for the use of the Temple.

2. "Two mites." We have all of us "two mites" which we can give. However great our poverty,—if we have absolutely nothing else,—we have at least a body and a soul to offer. They are but a poor offering, yet, if offered with the poor widow's willing heart, they will not be despised.

4. "Penury." Poverty, or "want", as in St. Mark. "Of her "penury" means 'out of the very little she had.'

A. D. 30.

5 ¶ And as some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, He said,

6 *As for* these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which [b] there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

[b] ch. 19. 44.

7 And they asked Him, saying, Master, but when shall these things be? and what sign *will there be* when these things shall come to pass?

8 And He said, [c] Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in My name, saying, I am *Christ;* [2] and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them.

[c] Eph. 5. 6. 2 Thess. 2. 3.

[2] Or, *and, The time,* Matt. 3. 2. & 4. 17.

9 But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end *is* not by and by.

10 Then said He unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom:

11 and great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven.

12 [d] But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute *you,* delivering *you* up to the synagogues, and [e] into prisons, [f] being brought before kings and rulers [g] for My name's sake.

[d] Rev. 2. 10. [e] Acts 4. 3. & 5. 18. & 12. 4. & 16. 24. [f] Acts 25. 23. [g] 1 Pet. 2. 13.

5—36. Prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem, and of the end of the world.

St. Matt. xxiv. St. Mark xiii.

5. "As some spake." These were the disciples who, as they went out to the Mount of Olives, pointed out to Christ the size of the stones with which the Temple was built.

"Gifts." Various ornaments and costly presents given by kings and others to the Temple. These could not be seen as they looked back on the Temple in passing out from the city to the Mount of Olives, but they had only just left the Temple itself, and continued to talk about its wealth and beauty.

8. "The time draweth near." That is, the time for the coming of Christ to establish His kingdom on earth.

9. "Not by and by." "Not yet."—'Not at once.'

12. "They shall lay their hands" &c. This passage (namely from this verse to 19) is embodied in the directions to the Apostles as given by St. Matthew (See on St. Matt. x. 5. *Note,* and 17—22.).

A.D. 30. 13 And [h] it shall turn to you for a testimony.

[h] Phil. 1. 28. 2 Thess. 1. 5.

[i] Matt. 10. 19. ch. 12. 11. 14 [i] Settle *it* therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer:

15 for I will give you a mouth and wisdom,

[k] Acts 6. 10. [k] which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist.

[l] Micah 7. 6. 16 [l] And ye shall be betrayed both by parents,

[m] Acts 7. 59. & 12. 2. and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and [m] *some* of you shall they cause to be put to death.

[n] Matt. 10. 22. 17 And [n] ye shall be hated of all *men* for My name's sake.

[o] Matt. 10. 30. 18 [o] But there shall not an hair of your head perish.

19 In your patience possess ye your souls.

20 And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.

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13. "It shall turn to you for a testimony." It shall become to you an opportunity for bearing witness to the Name of Christ.

15. "I will give you a mouth and wisdom," &c. "A mouth" means a power of speaking—eloquence. To "gainsay" is to contradict—to speak against.

18. "There shall not an hair" &c. "If this was understood as "a promise of temporal deliverance, it was fulfilled at the time of the "destruction of Jerusalem, when the Christians of Judæa all found "refuge at the town of Pella beyond Jordan. But it is rather to be "understood as an assurance of God's protecting providence over His "faithful servants in life or death" (*Archdeacon Churton.*). (For similar expressions see xii. 7. St. Matt. x. 30. and Acts xxvii. 34.)

19. "In your patience" &c. This verse, as well as the foregoing, is only found in St. Luke. By patience—that is, a patient continuance both in well-doing and in enduring—they should "possess", or keep safe, their true inner life. That would be safe, even were the life of the body lost. How blessed is this word of encouragement to all who have to battle with difficulties and hindrances from without. Let them only be patient, and their souls shall be safe. So too writes the prophet, "In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength" (Isaiah xxx. 15.).

20. "Jerusalem compassed with armies." This cannot be spoken of the actual siege itself, because then the warning to escape would be too late. We read however that four years before the actual siege the Roman Governor of Syria had marched a large army to Jerusalem and

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19. "*Possess ye.*" It is probable that the original word means 'ye shall possess', the difference in the Greek being only of a single letter, and the saying thus being a promise rather than a command. Yet the difference in meaning is unimportant.

21 Then let them which are in Judæa flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. A.D. 30.

22 For these be the days of vengeance, that [p] all things which are written may be fulfilled.

23 But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people.

24 And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, [q] until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

25 [r] And there shall be signs in the sun, and in

[p] Dan. 9. 26, 27. Zech. 11. 1.

[q] Dan. 9. 27. & 12. 7. Rom. 11. 25.

[r] 2 Pet. 3. 10, 12.

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threatened the city, though without making any attack. If this is the warning mentioned here, it would give the Christians ample time to leave the doomed city, and seek a safe refuge, before Titus, the Roman general, finally advanced upon it and began the siege.

21. "**In the countries.**" 'In the fields.' Many of the unbelieving Jews did actually flee into Jerusalem for protection from the advancing Roman army, thus increasing the horrors of the siege, and bringing on themselves miserable destruction.

22. "**The days of vengeance.**" In which Christ Himself came to execute judgment upon the nation which had rejected and crucified Him. If the days of this temporal vengeance were so terrible, what will be the days of the great eternal vengeance? "Who may abide "the day of His coming?" (Mal. iii. 2.).

"**Written.**" In the law and the prophets, in which are many threatenings of God's judgments (See, for instance, Deut. xxviii. 15—68.).

24. "**They shall fall**" &c. Josephus, the Jewish historian, says that 1,100,000 perished in the siege, and that 97,000 were carried away captive to Egypt and other lands.

"**Trodden down of the Gentiles.**" As in truth it has been ever since, having remained to this day in the possession of Gentiles and heathen (See on St. Matt. vi. 32.). It is now, and has long been, in the hands of the Turks, who are Mahometans in religion. "Turks" is used to signify Mahometans in the Third Collect for Good-Friday.

"**Until the times of the Gentiles**" &c. This prophecy is probably the same in meaning as that of St. Paul, who says that "blindness in "part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be "come in" (Rom. xi. 25.). But it may mean, as others suppose, until the times during which God has allotted to the Gentiles to bear sway over Jerusalem be fulfilled.

25. "**And there shall be**" &c. Here plainly is the same change, which we find in St. Matthew's version of this great discourse (St. Matt. xxiv. 29.),—a change from the type, the lesser temporal judgment of

A.D. 30. the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring;

26 men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.

27 And then shall they see the Son of man [s] coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

28 And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for [t] your redemption draweth nigh.

[s] Rev. 1. 7. & 14. 14.

[t] Rom. 8. 19, 23.

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the Jews, to the antitype, the great eternal judgment of the world. The lesser passes out of sight as the discourse advances: the greater stands out in the front of the awful picture.

"And upon the earth." These words almost seem as though the signs named in the former part of the verse are to be really signs *in the heavens*. If they are figures for powers on earth, whether spiritual or temporal, it is certainly strange to find other signs distinguished from them as being "upon the earth." We should be wrong to deny that there may be literally wonderful signs in the heavens *before* the great coming of the Lord, as indeed history tells us there were before the destruction of Jerusalem. The actual coming of the Lord will, we know, be accompanied with very awful signs (2 St. Pet. iii. 10—12.). Still the general language of Scripture (See on St. Matt.) is in favour of a mystical meaning in these heavenly signs, and it certainly appears that they are to be looked for *before*, and not together with, the second advent of Christ. If it were the latter, there would be no difficulty in taking them quite literally, but the following parable of the Fig-tree shuts out such a notion. On so mysterious a matter we must not judge hastily, nor pronounce decidedly. When we see the signs, we shall know them.

"The sea and the waves roaring." The above remarks as to the signs in the heavens apply to this sign on the earth also. It is probable that it is to be understood as a figure describing the "distress "of nations, with perplexity," as if it were, 'like unto the sea and 'the waves roaring.'

27. **"And then."** That is, *after* these things have taken place, for they are signs that the revelation of God's kingdom is "at hand" (31.), not that it is come.

"In a cloud." This is one point in which our Lord shall "so come "in like manner" as He went up (Acts i. 11.).

28. **"When these things begin" &c.** This shows, even more plainly than the parallel passage in St. Matthew (xxiv. 33.), that "these things" must be understood of the *last* great signs spoken of just before (25, 26.). When these "*begin*", the end is very near.

"Redemption." This word is used here of the end and completion of the work. The price of our redemption was paid on the Cross, so that we are already redeemed—"bought with a price." God the Son

29 And He spake to them a parable; Behold A.D. 30.
the fig tree, and all the trees;
30 when they now shoot forth, ye see and know
of your own selves that summer is now nigh at
hand.
31 So likewise ye, when ye see these things come
to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh
at hand.
32 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall
not pass away, till all be fulfilled.
33 Heaven and earth shall pass away: but My
words shall not pass away.
34 And [u] take heed to yourselves, lest at any time [u] Rom. 13. 13. 1 Thess. 5. 6. 1 Pet. 4. 7.
your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and
drunkenness, and cares of this life, and *so* that day
come upon you unawares.
35 For [x] as a snare shall it come on all them [x] 1 Thess. 5. 2. 2 Pet. 3. 10. Rev. 3. 3. & 16. 15.
that dwell on the face of the whole earth.
36 [y] Watch ye therefore, and [z] pray always, that [y] Matt. 25. 13. [z] ch. 18. 1.
ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these
things that shall come to pass, and [a] to stand before [a] Ps. 1. 5. Eph. 6. 13.
the Son of man.

"hath redeemed me and all mankind" (*Church Catechism.*). But the full effect and final triumph of this redemption will be when Christ comes again to take His redeemed people to their eternal home.

29. "The fig tree, and all the trees." St. Luke, writing for Gentiles, records the addition by our Lord of the words, "and all the trees." "Countries which have no fig-trees have their parables for watchful "hearts" (*Wordsworth.*).

31. "The kingdom of God." In its full and final glory (See on St. Matt. xiii. 43, and xxiv. 33.).

34. "Take heed to yourselves." Christ has been speaking of the distant future. See how He ends His discourse by bringing back the thoughts of His hearers to their own hearts, lest they forget that, if they would be ready for the Coming of the Lord, they must be living in daily watchfulness, taking heed to themselves.

35. "As a snare." Which falls in a moment on the unsuspecting animal. So suddenly shall *the day* fall upon the careless, who will not watch.

"That dwell." Literally 'that sit,' the word seeming to imply idleness and ease. Such men make earth their rest and their home.

36. "Watch . . . and pray." Mark the practical conclusion of the whole matter. The Lord does not speak of the things to come to satisfy vain curiosity, but to stir us up to hope and to watchfulness. His revelations are not to make men wiser but better.

A.D. 30. 37 ¶ [b] And in the day time He was teaching in the temple; and [c] at night He went out, and abode in the mount that is called *the mount* of Olives.

[b] John 8. 1, 2.
[c] ch. 22. 39.

38 And all the people came early in the morning to Him in the temple, for to hear Him.

CHAPTER XXII.

1 *The Jews conspire against Christ.* 3 *Satan prepareth Judas to betray Him.* 7 *The apostles prepare the passover.* 19 *Christ instituteth His holy supper,* 21 *covertly foretelleth of the traitor,* 24 *dehorteth the rest of His apostles from ambition,* 31 *assureth Peter his faith should not fail:* 34 *and yet he should deny Him thrice.* 39 *He prayeth in the mount, and sweateth blood,* 47 *is betrayed with a kiss:* 50 *He healeth Malchus' ear,* 54 *He is thrice denied of Peter,* 63 *shamefully abused,* 66 *and confesseth Himself to be the Son of God.*

NOW the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover.

37, 38. How our Lord spent the Holy-Week.

37. "In the day time" &c. This is a short account of the manner in which our Lord spent the few solemn days between His triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm-Sunday and His betrayal during the night of the Thursday following. His time was come, and He now spoke openly in the Temple day by day. It should be observed that these verses do not describe what took place *after* the discourse in this chapter, for that was probably uttered on one of the later days of this period (See on St. Matt. xxiii. 39.); they are a general account of all these sacred days.

"At night" &c. He certainly retired to Bethany for one night (See St. Matt. xxi. 17.), and probably for other nights, during the Holy-Week. But, Bethany being just beyond—over the ridge of—the Mount of Olives, it might very well be meant in this place (See on St. Matt. xxi. 1.). Still it is generally thought, and with good reason, that our Lord passed a large part of the night, and probably some entire nights, at this time in the open air upon the mountain side. The nights would at that time be light with the Paschal moon (See on St. Matt. xxvi. 36.). The expression "as He was wont", of our Lord's going into the Mount of Olives on the night of His betrayal (xxii. 39.), when certainly there was no idea of going as far as Bethany, favours this notion.

38. "All the people" &c. Our Lord's popularity (See on xix. 48.) no doubt stirred up the jealousy of the Scribes and Pharisees to a keener desire for His destruction. Were it not well if men in these days were ready to come early in the morning to God's house to meet the Saviour and to hear His words?

CHAPTER XXII.

1, 2. The Jews plot Christ's death.

St. Matt. xxvi. 1—5. St. Mark xiv. 1, 2.

1. "*Which is called the Passover.*" There is no need for any such explanation in a Gospel written for the Jews, like St. Matthew's.

2 And [a]the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill Him; for they feared the people. A.D. 30.

[a] Ps. 2. 2. John 11. 47. Acts 4. 27.

3 ¶ [b]Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve.

[b] John 13. 2, 27.

4 And he went his way, and communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray Him unto them.

5 And they were glad, and [c]covenanted to give him money.

[c] Zech. 11. 12.

6 And he promised, and sought opportunity to

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2. "They feared the people." The common people heard Christ gladly, and would not submit to any open act of violence against Him. They seem sometimes to have taken the law into their own hands, or at least to have been ready to take unlawful revenge upon such as displeased them. The Chief Priests and Scribes were afraid to speak slightingly of John's baptism, lest the people should stone them (xx. 6.), and at a later time, when the Apostles were brought before the council, the officers treated them with gentleness for the same reason (Acts v. 26.). It is not to be supposed that all the people, who welcomed our Lord as He rode into Jerusalem, and would have defended Him, now turned against Him at His crucifixion. Some no doubt did so, and others suffered themselves to be overborne by the stronger party, but the enmity now was mainly that of the Chief Priests and Scribes and their followers.

3—6. The bargain of Judas with the Chief Priests.

St. Matt. xxvi. 14—16. St. Mark xiv. 10, 11.

3. "Then entered Satan" &c. This terrible expression is repeated concerning Judas at the time when he went out to prepare the accomplishment of that devilish act, which he was now plotting (St. John xiii. 27.). Satan took possession of him both in the planning and in the fulfilling. God worketh in His own children "both to will "and to do of His good pleasure" (Phil. ii. 13.). The devil "worketh "in the children of disobedience" (Eph. ii. 2.) both to will and to do of his evil pleasure. A year before this our Lord had spoken very awful words of Judas, "Have I not chosen you twelve, and one "of you is a devil?" (St. John vi. 70.). He who allows Satan to enter into him is already classed among his servants, and becomes in character here what he will be in reality hereafter—"a devil".

4. "Captains." Called afterwards "captains of the temple" (52.). The "captain of the temple" is named as taking part with the Jewish council against the Apostles in the Acts of the Apostles (iv. 1. v. 24.). This was not a military title, the captains of the temple being the heads of the guard of Priests and Levites who kept constant watch in the temple day and night. The "chief captain", who took St. Paul prisoner (See Acts xxi. 31. xxii. 29.) was not one of these, but a Roman officer, captain of the band who kept guard in the castle near to the Temple.

A.D. 30. betray Him unto them [2]in the absence of the multitude.

[2] Or. *without tumult.*

7 ¶ Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed.

8 And He sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover, that we may eat.

9 And they said unto Him, Where wilt Thou that we prepare?

10 And He said unto them, Behold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall a man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house where he entereth in.

11 And ye shall say unto the goodman of the house, The Master saith unto thee, Where is the guestchamber, where I shall eat the passover with My disciples?

12 And he shall shew you a large upper room furnished: there make ready.

13 And they went, and found as He had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.

[d] Matt. 26. 20. Mark 14. 17.

14 ¶ [d] And when the hour was come, He sat down, and the twelve apostles with Him.

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6. "In the absence of the multitude." This gives the key to the whole betrayal. There was no difficulty in finding Christ in public; the real difficulty was to find Him apart from the people who held to Him.

7—13. The disciples sent to prepare the Passover.

St. Matt. xxvi. 17—19. St. Mark xiv. 12—16.

12. "Furnished." Ready prepared for a Passover party to keep the feast. Whether the man to whom the room belonged purposed lending or letting it to any party applying for it for the paschal feast, we cannot tell. Those who had large rooms frequently lent them to parties of strangers visiting Jerusalem for the purpose of keeping the Passover. It is plain however that this man gladly gave up his room to our Lord, "the Master," when asked to do so in His name.

When Jesus comes seeking a shelter, let our hearts be that furnished room, and lo! He, in His infinite love will come in to us, and sup with us, and we with Him (See Rev. iii. 20.).

14—18. Introductory words at the Paschal Supper.

14. "When the hour was come." That is, the legal hour for the eating of the Passover. This was "the evening" of the day on which the lamb was killed (See on St. Matt. xxvi. 17.).

15 And He said unto them, [2]With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: A.D. 30.

[2] Or, *I have heartily desired.*

16 for I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, [e]until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.

[e] ch. 14. 15. Acts 10. 41. Rev. 19. 9.

17 And He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide *it* among yourselves:

18 for [f]I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.

[f] Matt. 26. 29. Mark 14. 25.

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15. "With desire I have desired." That is, 'I have very greatly 'desired.' This was His great farewell feast of love, the last calm and blessed intercourse with His disciples before the hurried, and to them terrible, events of His capture, condemnation, and death. Besides it was a Passover of vast importance to the Christian Church, for it was now that the old type was to be closed, and the new Christian feast to be instituted. It was just a year before this that the disciples had been startled, and some offended, by the wonderful discourse concerning eating His Flesh and drinking His Blood, spoken at Capernaum (St. John vi.). He was now about to clear up part of the mystery of those words. Thus it was an occasion of great blessing to the disciples; and therefore Jesus had eagerly longed for it.

16. "I will not any more eat thereof." Our Lord declares that this is the last Passover He will eat on earth. And thus passes away the type, which was fulfilled in Him. This is the last true Passover feast.

"Until it be fulfilled." That is, 'until this Passover be fulfilled.' We can hardly doubt that our Lord's words point forward to the "marriage-supper of the Lamb" (Rev. xix. 9.), of which that paschal supper was a type. If Jesus could so earnestly desire the earthly foretaste, with what intensity of desire should we desire the heavenly fulfilment! The one was dark with the awful shadows of the approaching Cross. The other will be bright with the cloudless glory of the Divine radiance.

17. "He took the cup." This must be carefully distinguished from the similar act which our Lord performed in the institution of the Lord's Supper shortly afterwards (20.). This cup was one of the paschal cups, tasted by all from time to time during the feast (See on St. Matt. xxvi. 17.).

"Take this and divide it" &c. Probably our Lord had first tasted the cup Himself (as was customary for the master of the house to do at the Passover) and then passed it to the disciples.

18. "I will not drink" &c. This answers to the saying concerning the eating, in 16. Both sayings refer to the Passover, and not to the

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18. "*I will not drink*" *&c.* In St. Matthew (xxvi. 29.), and St. Mark (xiv. 25.), these words are placed *after* the institution of the Lord's Supper, as though they referred to the sacramental cup. It is however best to understand the words,

A.D. 30. 19 ¶ And He took bread, and gave thanks, and brake *it*, and gave unto them, saying, This is My
g 1 Cor. 11. 24. body which is given for you: g this do in remembrance of Me.

20 Likewise also the cup after supper, saying,

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sacramental eating and drinking, of which our Lord had not yet spoken. The "kingdom of God" in this verse (as in 16,) must be understood of the kingdom in its perfected and triumphant state (See on St. Matt. xiii. 43.).

19, 20. The Institution of the Lord's Supper.

St. Matt. xxvi. 26—29. St. Mark xiv. 22—25.

19. "This is My body." Most of the errors upon the subject of the Holy Communion have arisen from attempts to explain what is a mystery, and to define what the Holy Spirit has veiled from our curious sight. There is great wisdom in the following words, ascribed to Queen Elizabeth:—

"Christ was the Word that spake it:
"He took the bread, and brake it:
"And what that Word did make it,
"That I believe, and take it."

In the same spirit one of the holiest and wisest writers of our Church says: "What these elements are in themselves it skilleth not. It is "enough that unto me which take them they are the Body and Blood "of Christ. His promise in witness hereof sufficeth. His word He "knoweth which way to accomplish. Why should any cogitation possess "the mind of a faithful communicant but this, O my God, Thou art "true: O my soul, thou art happy?" (*Hooker.*).

"This do in remembrance of Me." These words are not given by the other Evangelists, though recorded by St. Paul, who tells us, on the authority of Christ Himself, that similar words accompanied

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not as having special reference to the sacramental cup, but as spoken *generally* of the wine which Jesus had that night tasted with His disciples. It is probable that our Lord did not Himself taste of the sacramental cup. For the meaning of the words see on St. Matt. xxvi. 29.

19. "*This do.*" It may be well to observe that the word translated "do" is one frequently used in the Greek translation of the Old Testament for the performance of any solemn rite or ceremony, as, for instance, for *keeping* the Passover, *observing* any of the solemn feasts, *performing* a sacrificial rite—and often for the very act of *offering a sacrifice*. Thus it would probably have in the ears of the Apostles a much more solemn meaning than the English word conveys to us, and might be translated 'Perform' or 'Celebrate' this: though without excluding the people's share in the solemn act.

"*Remembrance.*" In support of the view that a memorial *before God* is a true and necessary part of the Eucharist (although not that which our Lord speaks of in this command), we may observe that such memorial was a marked feature in the ancient sacrifices, which foreshadowed the same Atonement which we commemorate in the Lord's Supper (See Lev. ii. 2, 9, 16. xxiv. 7. Num. x. 10.). Indeed we make memorial before God of the Sacrifice of Christ not alone in this holy sacrament (though most signally so), for we do this whenever we end a prayer "through Je-"sus Christ our Lord."

[h] This cup *is* the new testament in My blood, A.D. 30.
which is shed for you. [h] 1 Cor. 10. 16.

21 ¶ [i] But, behold, the hand of him that be- [i] Ps. 41. 9.
trayeth Me *is* with Me on the table.

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the giving of the cup (1 Cor. xi. 25.), a fact we do not learn at all from the Gospels. Both parts of the command require thoughtful attention.

1. What is the meaning of "This do"? Some hold that the command, being addressed to the Apostles, and having reference to Christ's own sacramental act, is rather a command to Christ's ministers to celebrate, than to His people to partake of, the Holy Communion; in which case the meaning would be, 'Do that which I have done—enact 'this solemn rite—bless and distribute this bread and this cup.' Even if this were so, the duty of partaking would be implied in the command to bless and to distribute, for the Sacrament is celebrated for the express purpose of communicating. St. Paul however gives an explanation of the words, "Do this", which shows that they certainly extend to the eating and drinking, adding after our Lord's command these important words, "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do "shew the Lord's death till He come" (1 Cor. xi. 26.); the "eat" and "drink" in this verse answering to "This do" in the two previous verses. Thus the command must be taken to embrace the whole sacred ordinance,—the blessing and distributing on the part of the priest, the eating and drinking on the part of all.

2. What is the meaning of "in remembrance of Me"? Literally this means, 'for My memorial.' This 'memorial' may be either a memorial *for man*, that is, an act to bring vividly before man the remembrance of His Saviour's Death: or a memorial *before God*, that is, an act wherein we plead and present before God's mercy-seat the one "full, perfect, and sufficient Sacrifice," with which alone we may "come boldly unto the throne of grace" (Hebr. iv. 16.). Both of these two memorials, or commemorations, are true and necessary parts of the Eucharist. It pictures Christ crucified to man; and it pleads Christ crucified before God. But here again, in the same verse which helped us to the meaning of "This do", St. Paul gives the key to the words before us. For, as the "eat" and "drink" answers to "This do", so do the words "ye shew the Lord's death" answer to "in remem- "brance of Me." But the Greek word translated "ye shew" can only mean *before man*. Therefore we conclude that our Lord is speaking rather of a memorial for man, than of a memorial before God. The whole command may be explained thus: 'Observe this holy Sacrament 'as showing forth My death till I come.'

21—23. Announcement of the betrayal.

St. Matt. xxvi. 21—25. St. Mark xiv. 18—21. St. John xiii. 21—30.

21. "**But, behold.**" We may well suppose that there would be at least a solemn pause after the giving of the sacramental cup, and while

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21. "*But, behold.*" *&c.* It has been mentioned (upon St. Matt. xxvi. 25.) that many think Judas left the Upper Chamber before the institution of the

A.D. 30.

22 And truly the Son of man goeth, [k] as it was determined: but woe unto that man by whom He is betrayed!

[k] Acts 2. 23. & 4. 28.

23 And they began to enquire among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing.

[l] Mark 9. 34. ch. 9. 46.

24 ¶ [l] And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.

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the Apostles in turn partook of it. Thus these words would not be joined on in reality so closely to the solemn words of the institution of the Sacrament as in the Evangelist's brief account they seem to be.

How mightily did the presence of the traitor, with his frightful hypocrisy, weigh down the soul of the spotless Son of God. Throughout the solemn Supper Jesus appears again and again to have spoken the terrible truth. We can hardly conceive hardness of heart, and boldness of deceit, capable of remaining in the presence of that Eye which so plainly saw all.

"With Me on the table." These words do not point out the traitor, but only declare that he is sitting at the same table, and eating of the same dishes, as our Lord (See on St. Matt.).

24—30. Strife as to which should be greatest, and discourse upon it.

24. "There was also a strife" &c. Such a strife had taken place on a former occasion (See ix. 46. and St. Matt. xviii. 1.). It surprises us to find the same ambitious thoughts entering into so sacred a scene as that before us. Yet Satan is busiest in holiest hours. There is no absolute necessity to suppose this strife to have taken place where St. Luke relates it in the order of events, since his words "There was "also" may refer to any period during the evening. Many accordingly imagine the strife to have been on first sitting down to supper, and to have arisen from anxiety to be near to Jesus. This in itself seems more probable than that any such strife should have arisen after the terrible "Is it I?", and the solemn sacramental feast. Yet it is possible that the privilege of St. John in "leaning on Jesus' Bosom" may even at so unlikely an hour, have been turned into an occasion for bringing up again the old question. We can hardly doubt that the discourse here given is closely connected with that after the washing of the feet related by St. John (xiii. 12—16.). The words "I am "among you as he that serveth" (27.) seem certainly to relate to that; and that certainly took place early in the events of the evening.

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holy Sacrament. If so, of course St. Luke is relating in this place a conversation which really took place at an earlier part of the evening, as would appear from St. Matthew's and St. Mark's Gospels. It seems however more probable, even if this is the same conversation with that related by the two earlier Evangelists, and not a repetition of the announcement, that they have recorded it before it actually took place, and not St. Luke after. St. Luke is generally more careful to set forth "in order" (i. 3.) what he relates, and in the present case St. Luke's order is of special significance, since it implies that the traitor was present at, and partook of, the Sacramental rite.

A.D. 30.

25 [m] And He said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors.

[m] Matt. 20. 25. Mark 10. 42.

26 [n] But ye *shall* not *be* so: [o] but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.

[n] Matt. 20. 26. 1 Pet. 5. 3.
[o] ch. 9. 48.

27 [p] For whether *is* greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? *is* not he that sitteth at meat? but [q] I am among you as he that serveth.

[p] ch. 12. 37.
[q] Matt. 20. 28. John 13. 13, 14. Phil. 2. 7.

28 Ye are they which have continued with Me in [r] My temptations.

[r] Heb. 4. 15.

29 And [s] I appoint unto you a kingdom, as My Father hath appointed unto Me;

[s] Matt. 24. 47. ch. 12. 32. 2 Cor. 1. 7. 2 Tim. 2. 12.

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25. "The kings of the Gentiles" &c. Our Lord, in rebuking the spirit of His Apostles, repeats the words He had spoken to them after the presumptuous request of the sons of Zebedee (St. Matt. xx. 25—28.), though with some little change of expression (see especially 27.) to suit the occasion, and in reference to the act which the words probably accompanied, namely the washing of the feet.

"Benefactors." One of the kings of Egypt was always known by a title which signified 'the Benefactor.'

26. "Ye *shall* not *be* so." No, for Christianity reverses the world's judgments. Greatness is littleness; humility is true nobility.

27. "I am among you as he that serveth." These words would have a peculiar force if spoken just after our Lord had gone from one to another of the disciples, with the basin and towel, washing their feet. This was usually the servant's duty.

28. "Ye are they" &c. This and the next two verses are again a repetition of a former saying (St. Matt. xix. 28.), though again slightly altered to suit the occasion. *Then* it was simply "Ye which have "followed Me": *now* it is, "Ye which have continued with Me in "My temptations". By "temptations" is here (as so frequently) meant 'trials.' So far the Apostles had clung faithfully to their Master. Thus they might comfort themselves with the promise made to such. We must observe how mercifully our Lord rebukes the thought of earthly rivalry and greatness by the promise of heavenly glory and bliss. How can *they* contend for the first place here, who are to be princes in the kingdom of glory hereafter; and this too when they have often been told that the path to that glory lies through humiliation?

29. "I appoint unto you a kingdom." They wished for greatness. Jesus tells them they shall have it: only not perhaps as and where they think.

"As My Father hath appointed unto Me." The kingdom Christ bestows upon His saints is not only the same kingdom which the Father has bestowed upon Him, so that they are "joint-heirs with Christ", but also it is bestowed on like conditions. Christ "humbled Himself, "and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. *Where-*

A.D. 30. 30 that [t]ye may eat and drink at My table
[t] Matt. 8. 11. ch. 14. 15. Rev. 19. 9. in My kingdom, [u] and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.
[u] Ps. 49. 14. Matt. 19. 28. 1 Cor. 6. 2. Rev. 3. 21.

31 ¶ And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold,
[x] 1 Pet. 5. 8. [x] Satan hath desired *to have* you, that he may
[y] Amos 9. 9. [y] sift *you* as wheat:
[z] John 17. 9, 11, 15. 32 but [z] I have prayed for thee, that thy faith

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"*fore* God also hath highly exalted Him". So too he that humbleth himself shall be exalted to the kingdom of glory. Christ says, 'I give 'you *as* My Father hath given Me, the same kingdom, on the same 'terms.'

30. "That ye may eat and drink" &c. Plainly these words are suggested by the occasion on which they were spoken. The paschal meal, as well as the sacramental, would naturally suggest such language. We might, not unreasonably, have supposed the former part of this verse to refer to the Holy Communion to be eaten and drunk in the new kingdom of the Church of Christ on earth, but the latter part proves that the whole is spoken of the kingdom in its perfected state hereafter. It is quite out of the question to refer *this* verse to any eating and drinking with our Lord between His Resurrection and Ascension. And surely the meaning of this verse must settle the meaning of 16 and 18 (See also on St. Matt. xix. 28, and xxvi. 29.).

31—34. The prophecy of St. Peter's denial.

St. Matt. xxvi. 30—35. St. Mark xiv. 26—31. St. John xiii. 36—'38.

31. "Simon, Simon." This very remarkable saying is given only by St. Luke, but is plainly a part of the same conversation in which our Lord (as related by all the Evangelists) foretells St. Peter's denial.

"Satan hath desired *to have* you." Satan had *asked* to make this sifting; and God had permitted it. No one is tempted except by Divine permission. We should compare with this the mysterious history of Satan's request to try Job (Job i.). The word "you" here is in the plural number, and does not refer to St. Peter only, though the words are spoken to him. Satan's sifting was to be of *all* the Apostles, Judas, who had gone out before this, of course, excepted. *His* sifting was over.

"Sift *you* as wheat." This implies a searching trial. The sifting is much the same as the winnowing (St. Matt. iii. 12.), and is for the purpose of separating the good wheat from the chaff or light grain. Christ and Satan both sift, and both separate: but Christ to save the good, Satan to seize upon the bad. Our Lord's words "as wheat" already seem to promise that the Apostles shall come safely through the trial.

32. "I have prayed for thee." "For *thee*"—that is, St. Peter only, of whom our Lord now speaks. For him had Christ already interceded. But why for him alone? We need not suppose this. We may rather believe our Lord had prayed for them all. But He names his special intercession for St. Peter because it was specially good for him to know it. The approaching sifting would be specially severe with him. Satan was about to handle very roughly this the foremost

fail not: [a] and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. A.D. 30.

[a] Ps. 51. 13. John 21. 15, 16, 17.

33 And he said unto Him, Lord, I am ready to go with Thee, both into prison, and to death.

34 And He said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest Me.

35 ¶ [b] And He said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing.

[b] Matt. 10. 9. ch. 9. 3. & 10. 4.

36 Then said He unto them, But now, he that

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of the Apostles' company. He was even to gain a great triumph over him for a season. And the fallen Apostle might despair. This assurance then of his Lord's prayers would greatly comfort him, and help him in his penitence.

"That thy faith fail not." That is, 'fail not utterly and finally.' Observe, the Divine Mediator did not pray that St. Peter might not be tempted, but only that he might not be overwhelmed by the temptation. The sifting of temptation is very needful both for humility and for watchfulness. Christ will not "quench" the "smoking flax" (St. Matt. xii. 20.). The faith that is near going out His prayers and His grace will yet fan up into a bright flame again. But mark the warning. Even an Apostle's faith *may* fail. (Comp. 1 Cor. ix. 27.). Yes; and even *his*, whose noble confession received so high a blessing (St. Matt. xvi. 17.).

"When thou art converted," &c. "Converted" means 'turned 'back again', and refers here plainly to St. Peter's penitence after his denial. But what strange words these must have seemed to him then. "Converted": then he would certainly fall so as to need a true and deep penitence. "Strengthen thy brethren": then he was not fit to do so yet. We can imagine what sorrow and pain the words would cause to the eager ardent disciple. He could not believe it possible. He needed humbling, and teaching his own weakness, before he would be fit to strengthen the weak.

33. "Lord, I am ready" &c. Over-confidence in self was St. Peter's besetting fault. Yet this is a fault often found in noble generous natures. How much more loveable is this impulsive zeal than a cold calculating spirit, which will dare nothing for Christ.

34. "I tell thee, Peter." Perhaps there is a force here in the word "Peter", as though it were, 'I tell thee, thou who art called Peter, the 'Rock, and who thinkest thyself as firm and strong as a rock,' &c. This is the only place in which our Lord addresses the Apostle by his name "Peter", except on the occasion when He first gave him the name.

35—38. Conversation concerning the sword.

36. "But now." Christ is preparing His disciples for a very different state of things from that which they had hitherto experienced.

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36. "*He that hath no sword*," *&c.* The literal translation of these words is, 'He 'that hath not, let him sell his garment, 'and buy a sword.' By 'hath not' our

A.D. 30. hath a purse, let him take *it*, and likewise *his* scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one.

37 For I say unto you, that this that is written
c Mark 15. 28. must yet be accomplished in Me, c **And He was reckoned among the transgressors:** for the things concerning Me have an end. Isai. 53. 12.

38 And they said, Lord, behold, here *are* two swords. And He said unto them, It is enough.

They are no longer to expect miraculous protection or a miraculous supply of their needs. They must face the world and its persecutions, and make all due provision for meeting danger and difficulty.

"**No sword.**" These words are not intended to be literally acted upon, as we see from what follows, and from our Lord's words to Pilate (St. John xviii. 36.), but are rather a strong expression to imply great coming danger. Still our Lord could not have used such language at all, if it were, as some say, wrong at all times, and under all circumstances, to use force. He certainly appears, by this mention of the sword, to give His sanction to a due provision on the part of Christians for their personal safety.

37. "**He was reckoned among the transgressors.**" Our Lord is here giving the reason why the disciples must expect to have to defend themselves against their enemies. When their Master was (according to this well-known prophecy) counted no better than a malefactor, they could not expect any better treatment. "The disciple is not "above his master, nor the servant above his lord" (St. Matt. x. 24.).

"**The things concerning Me have an end.**" That is, not only 'are fulfilled', but 'are *now* coming to an end—*now* receiving their 'fulfilment.'

38. "**Lord, behold, here *are* two swords.**" One was no doubt St. Peter's, for he had one just afterwards in the garden. Plainly the Apostles mistook our Lord's meaning, and thought He spoke of the immediate need of actual swords. But how came they to have these two swords? It does not seem natural that the disciples of the "meek "and lowly" Jesus should be armed with swords. Nor is it likely they were in general. But on this occasion they had been warned again and again of the treatment their Master would receive when He came to Jerusalem: and some of them, in their mistaken zeal and ardour, may have resolved to defend Him, as we find St. Peter doing in the garden, and so have procured these swords. It is also said that the Jews frequently armed themselves on journeys, such as that which our Lord and His Apostles had but just taken, as a protection against robbers, and this may account for the possession of the two swords.

"**It is enough.**" This does not mean 'The two swords are enough', but is a gentle way of putting aside the offer, and ending the conversation, as though it were 'Enough of talking about this matter'. Our Lord says nothing to explain His meaning more clearly, because the

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translators understood 'hath not *a sword*': but it is more probable that 'hath not' either refers to the *purse* just before named, or else is to be taken by itself, as meaning 'hath nothing' (as in St. Matt. xxv. 29.).

39 ¶ [d] And He came out, and [e] went, as He was wont, to the mount of Olives; and His disciples also followed Him. A.D. 30.
[d] John 18. 1.
[e] ch. 21. 37.

40 [f] And when He was at the place, He said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation.
[f] ver. 46. Matt. 6. 13.

41 And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed,

42 saying, Father, if Thou be [2] willing, remove this cup from Me: nevertheless [g] not My will, but Thine, be done.
[2] Gr. *willing to remove.*
[g] John 5. 30. & 6. 38.

43 And there appeared [h] an angel unto Him from heaven, strengthening Him.
[h] Matt. 4. 11.

Apostles would not, or could not, understand Him. Lange says, "If "it were possible for us to imagine the Lord Jesus, during any moment "of this paschal night, with a faint sad smile upon His heavenly coun- "tenance, it would be at this offer of the two swords. Two swords "to oppose all the powers of the world, of hell, and of death, which "were about to attack Him!" It was said anciently, "If the Lord meant "His disciples to use carnal weapons, a hundred swords would be too "few: if heavenly, two were too many." Thus it is plain He is not speaking of the defence of that night.

39—46. The Agony in Gethsemane.

St. Matt. xxvi. 36—46. St. Mark xiv. 32—42.

39. "The mount of Olives." This expression seems to embrace all the lower part of the hill, or rather perhaps all that lay on the farther side of the brook Kedron, between which and the hill itself was the garden of Gethsemane (See on St. Matt. xxi. 1. xxvi. 36. and Map of Jerusalem.).

40. "Pray that ye enter not" &c. St. Matthew has in this place only "Tarry ye here and watch with Me". It seems however, from a comparison of that account with this, that our Lord uttered His command to "*Watch and pray*" both at the beginning and at the end of His Agony. Thus the *watching* (only mentioned in St. Matthew) was to be no idle watching, but a watching unto the *prayer* (only mentioned in St. Luke.).

41. "About a stone's cast." This seems to have been a familiar saying among the Jews, meaning 'some little distance', without being very precise.

"Kneeled down." Some have supposed that, when it is said that Jesus "fell on His face" (St. Matt.), or "fell on the ground" (St. Mark), it may be supposed that this was through weakness and exhaustion. But the calmer expression used here—"kneeled down"—seems rather to lead to the view that it is a posture of deep reverence which is described.

43. "There appeared an angel." This verse and the next are only found in St. Luke. As Angels came and ministered to our Lord after His Temptation (St. Matt. iv. 11.), so an Angel is sent to strengthen Him now. We are not told *how* the Angel strengthened Him; nor whether he was seen by the three Apostles or no. In whatever the strengthening consisted, it appears to have been to enable Jesus to

A. D. 30.

44 [i] And being in an agony He prayed more
[i] John 12. 27. Heb. 5. 7. earnestly: and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

45 And when He rose up from prayer, and was come to His disciples, He found them sleeping for sorrow,

46 and said unto them, Why sleep ye? rise
[k] ver. 40. and [k] pray, lest ye enter into temptation.

47 ¶ And while He yet spake, behold a mul-

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bear the intense weight of the remaining agony, described in the next verse. Thus does God often answer prayer. We ask for the removal of the suffering, and an Angel is sent to strengthen us to bear it. So St. Paul thrice besought the Lord that the "thorn in the flesh" might depart from him. But his answer is a message from heaven, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in "weakness" (2 Cor. xii. 8, 9.). We can hardly doubt that we have an inspired commentary upon the Agony in Gethsemane, when we read of Christ that "in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up "prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him "that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He "feared; though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the "things which He suffered" (Hebr. v. 7, 8.).

44. "His sweat" &c. There can be little doubt that the meaning of this awful passage is that the inner struggle was so torturing as to force from our Lord's sacred Body a sweat stained with His very Blood. Such an occurrence is not quite unheard of. History and Medical Science bear testimony to its having sometimes happened during great torture. Well may we apply to our Lord in His Agony the words of the "weeping prophet", and hear Him cry, "Is it nothing "to you, all ye that pass by? Behold, and see if there be any sorrow "like unto My sorrow!" (Lam. i. 12.).

45. "Sleeping for sorrow." Not for sloth. Though this was weakness, yet it was not wilful neglect. They were quite worn out by the grief, and anxiety, and excitement, of this night of wonders.

46. "Rise and pray." Does the "Rise" here stand for the "watch" of St. Matthew? It is possible, since both words may be understood as simply a call to awake, and rouse themselves to prayer. May not those who are often grieved by sleep stealing over them during their devotions find some comfort here? The Apostles slept. And Jesus did not harshly chide them, but rather roused them to renewed prayer.

47—53. The betrayal and taking of Jesus.

St. Matt. xxvi. 47—56. St. Mark xiv. 43—52. St. John xviii. 1—12.

47. "Drew near unto Jesus to kiss Him. We can hardly conceive such frightful malice and hypocrisy possible. But the fall of those most

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47. "*He that was called Judas.*" This way of speaking of Judas shows that St. Luke was writing his Gospel for Gentile Christians, who would not be so familiar with the names of the actors in the events related as the Christians of the Jewish Church would be.

titude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near unto Jesus to kiss Him. A. D. 30.

48 But Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?

49 When they which were about Him saw what would follow, they said unto Him, Lord, shall we smite with the sword?

50 And one of them smote the servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear.

51 And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. And He touched his ear, and healed him.

52 Then Jesus said unto the chief priests, and captains of the temple, and the elders, which were come to Him, Be ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and staves?

53 When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against Me: [1] but this is your hour, and the power of darkness. [1] John 12. 27.

highly exalted is always the deepest. Except the fall of Satan from heaven never was there fall so great as that of Judas.

48. "Judas, betrayest thou" &c. The address *by name*, as well as the form of the question, seems to have in it as much of sorrowful gentleness as of bitter reproach. Yet the kiss of Judas was the crown of hypocrisy, and must have been even more hateful to Christ than the spitting of the rabble. Open enmity and insult always seemed to Him more endurable than secret malice under the veil of friendliness. Are there no sins in these days bearing a fearfully strong likeness to the kiss of Judas?

49. "Lord, shall we smite" &c. Plainly whosoever asked this question (probably St. Peter) waited not for the answer, but at once acted on his own hot impulse.

51. "Suffer ye thus far." The meaning of these words has been much disputed. Two views are chiefly worthy of notice. 1. That the words were addressed to the *disciples*, and mean, 'That is enough: 'ye have shown your readiness to defend Me: be content.' 2. That the words were spoken to the *soldiers* who were binding our Lord's Hands, and are a request for liberty to touch and heal the wounded man, meaning, 'Allow Me so much: permit Me only freedom for a 'moment to do this.'

53. "This is your hour, and the power of darkness." By "your "hour" is meant that hour in which God permits you to work your wicked work. In strict truth it was *God's* hour, for His time was come, but He used the Jews as His instruments, and so gave the hour to them. "The power of darkness" means the power of the kingdom of darkness, or, in other words, of Satan the prince of darkness. This was not only man's hour, it was also the triumph (how empty and

52. "*Captains of the temple.*" See on 4.

A.D. 30.

54 ¶ [m] Then took they Him, and led *Him*, and brought Him into the high priest's house. [n] And Peter followed afar off.

[m] Matt. 26. 57.

[n] Matt. 26. 58.

55 And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were set down together, Peter sat down among them.

56 But a certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him, and said, This man was also with Him.

57 And he denied Him, saying, Woman, I know Him not.

58 And after a little while another saw him, and said, Thou art also of them. And Peter said, Man, I am not.

59 And about the space of one hour after another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this *fellow* also was with Him: for he is a Galilæan.

60 And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew.

61 And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter.

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short-lived!) of Satan's malice. Indeed "the power of darkness" was displayed *in* the enmity and violence of the Jews.

54—62. St. Peter's denial and repentance.

St. Matt. xxvi. 69—75. St. Mark xiv. 66—72. St. John xviii. 13—27.

54. "The high priest's house." St. Luke does not give the name of the High Priest, but he probably refers to Caiaphas, the visit to Annas, which took place first, having been very brief and unimportant (See on St. John xviii. 13, 24.).

56. "A certain maid." It is not Pontius Pilate, nor the fierce Roman soldiers, nor the jailer with his keys, nor the hangman with his hammer and nails, by whom the Apostle falls, but a simple maid-servant. Beware of lesser temptations. Sometimes they are more dangerous than greater.

58. "Man, I am not." It was, as we learn from St. Matthew, another maid who called attention to St. Peter this second time, and pointed him out to the by-standers, though doubtless a man, possibly several, questioned him. We also learn from St. Matthew that this answer was accompanied by an oath. St. Luke also omits the cursing and swearing in the third denial.

59. "For he is a Galilæan." It seems that this pointing out of Peter by his tongue drew to him the attention of Malchus' kinsman, who immediately recognized him as having been in the garden with our Lord (St. John xviii. 26.).

61. "The Lord turned, and looked upon Peter." This look of sad but tender reproach at the very time of the second cock-crowing must have all but overwhelmed the guilty Apostle with the sudden

And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said unto him, [o] Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny Me thrice. A.D. 30.

[o] Matt. 26. 34. John 13. 38.

62 And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.

63 ¶ And the men that held Jesus mocked Him, and smote *Him*.

64 And when they had blindfolded Him, they struck Him on the face, and asked Him, saying, Prophesy, who is it that smote Thee?

65 And many other things blasphemously spake they against Him.

66 ¶ And as soon as it was day, [p] the elders of

[p] Acts 4. 26. See Acts 22. 5.

revelation of his cowardly treachery. For plainly he did not before this recollect his Lord's words as to his denial of Him. But how could this be? Possibly because he expected the temptation to deny Jesus to be something much more tremendous, and calling for a far more heroic courage, than the mere questionings of a few idle servants. Perhaps he expected to have to appear before the council, and there answer like his Master, and having resolved to meet the greater trial he overlooked the less. This is a very common error. We nerve ourselves for a great struggle, but suffer ourselves to be conquered day by day in little things. Let us not fail to note the mercy of Christ in St. Peter's pardon. Doubtless this was made known to him on the very day of the Resurrection, on which we know that Jesus appeared to him (St. Luke xxiv. 34. 1 Cor. xv. 5.). It was however fully sealed and confirmed to him in the great scene on the shores of the Sea of Galilee (See St. John xxi. 15—17.).

63—65. The mocking of the servants.

St. Matt. xxvi. 67, 68. St. Mark xiv. 65.

63. "The men that held Jesus mocked Him," &c. This took place after the first trial or examination, which occurred in the night during the time occupied by the denials of St. Peter above related. St. Luke omits this first trial altogether [unless, as some suppose, he names some of the events which occurred in it in his account of the *second* assembly of the Council, or Sanhedrin, after day-light (66—71.), giving, as it were, a very brief summary of the two examinations in one.].

64. "Prophesy." This word is used in rather an unusual sense here. It does not signify foretelling, nor, of course, inspired preaching, but simply revealing something hidden by a miraculous knowledge. Jesus could not see those who struck Him, and they insultingly ask Him, as a Prophet professing to know hidden things, to tell the names of the strikers.

66—71. Jesus before the Council.

St. Matt. xxvii. 1, 2. St. Mark xv. 1.

66. "As soon as it was day." This appears to refer to the *second* assembly of the Council or Sanhedrin (See on St. Matt. xxvi. 3.).

65. "*Blasphemously.*" See on St. Mark vii. 22.

A.D. 30. the people and the chief priests and the scribes came together, and led Him into their council, saying,

q Matt. 26 63, 64. 65. Mark 14. 61, 62, 63. 67 q Art Thou the Christ? tell us. And He said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe:

68 and if I also ask *you*, ye will not answer Me, nor let *Me* go.

r Heb. 1. 3. & 8. 1. 69 r Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God.

70 Then said they all, Art Thou then the Son of God? And He said unto them, Ye say that I am.

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67. "Art Thou the Christ?" It may cause surprise to find some things described by St. Luke as occurring at this later meeting of the Council, which St. Matthew and St. Mark describe as occurring at the earlier. And this has led some to suppose that St. Luke is giving a brief summary of the two meetings in one (See on 63.). It is however more satisfactory to suppose this to be an account of the later meeting only. If the hasty meeting of the Council in the night was really only an informal examination, and not a legal trial, the Jews not being allowed by law to hold a trial on a capital charge by night, then it is most natural that, when the legal hour arrived, and the Council was duly assembled (probably in fuller numbers), much of the same matter should have been repeated. Take this very question. "Art Thou the Christ?" Our Lord, having assented to it before, would be perfectly certain to be asked it again now, that He might repeat His former answer. Indeed it is asked Him *twice over* on this same occasion (See 70.). Moreover His reply, "If I tell you", &c. seems to point to His *having told* them before.

68. "And if I also ask you," &c. If, that is, I question you so as to prove My own innocence. This our Lord had done often, and the questioners were put to silence (See St. Matt. xxi. 27. xxii. 46.), but not convinced.

69. "Hereafter shall the Son of man" &c. Our Lord repeats the solemn warning, which He had uttered to them in the night (See St. Matt. xxvi. 64.), and which had then ended the examination. He knew the effect the words had then, and would have again. Yet He simply repeats the warning, declaring that "hereafter"—literally 'henceforth' (See on St. Matt.)—they should see the exaltation of Him whom now they were condemning to death. From the very time of His Death did His glory begin (See on St. John xiii. 31.).

70. "Art Thou then the Son of God?" Probably the Council would mean the same thing by the two questions, "Art Thou the "Christ?" and, "Art Thou the Son of God?" But it is very remarkable that this second question is asked in immediate answer to our Lord's saying concerning the Son of *man*. Thus it seems the Council understood our Lord to mean by "Son of man" the same as "Son of "God." Or they may only have suspected that He so used the expression, and to make sure of His meaning asked Him distinctly, "Art Thou the Son of God?"

"Ye say that I am." Like "Thou hast said" (St. Matt. xxvi. 25, 64.),

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70. "*Ye say that I am.*" The word translated "that" may also signify 'because', and this sentence is sometimes interpreted thus: 'Ye say (that is, the 'truth), because I am.'

71 And they said, What need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of His own mouth. A.D. 30.

CHAPTER XXIII.

1 *Jesus is accused before Pilate, and sent to Herod.* 8 *Herod mocketh Him.* 12 *Herod and Pilate are made friends.* 13 *Barabbas is desired of the people, and is loosed by Pilate, and Jesus is given to be crucified.* 27 *He telleth the women, that lament Him, the destruction of Jerusalem:* 34 *prayeth for His enemies.* 39 *Two evildoers are crucified with Him.* 46 *His death.* 50 *His burial.*

AND [a] the whole multitude of them arose, and led Him unto Pilate. [a] Mark 15. 1.

2 And they began to accuse Him, saying, We found this *Fellow* [b] perverting the nation, and [c] forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, saying [d] that He Himself is Christ a King. [b] Acts 17. 7. [c] See Matt. 17. 27. & 22. 21. Mark 12. 17. [d] John 19. 12.

3 [e] And Pilate asked Him, saying, Art Thou the King of the Jews? And He answered him and said, Thou sayest *it*. [e] 1 Tim. 6. 13.

4 Then said Pilate to the chief priests and *to* the people, [f] I find no fault in this Man. [f] 1 Pet. 2. 22.

5 And they were the more fierce, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place.

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this is a form of simple assent. It means 'Ye say truly in suggesting 'that I am the Son of God.'

71. "**What need we**" &c. Whether the witnesses who had been examined at the earlier meeting of the council were called upon to give evidence again at this second meeting, or whether these words imply that they had no need so to call them, does not appear. As Caiaphas said before, so all the council agree now in saying, that Jesus has condemned Himself.

CHAPTER XXIII.

1—5. Jesus brought before Pilate.

St. Matt. xxvii. 1, 2, 11—14. St. John xviii. 28—38.

2. "**Forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar.**" This was a barefaced and wicked lie, for our Lord had taught exactly the opposite to this (See St. Matt. xxii. 21.). The Jews knew however that such an accusation would have more weight with the Roman governor than any charge of blasphemy against a God in whom he did not believe.

4. "**Then said Pilate**" &c. We find from St. John's fuller account that this was after the conversation held inside the judgment hall, in which Jesus explained the nature of His kingdom (St. John xviii. 33—38.). It is plain that, had no more passed than St. Luke here records, Pilate could not have said "I find no fault in this Man."

A.D. 30. 6 ¶ When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked whether the Man were a Galilæan.

7 And as soon as he knew that He belonged unto
f ch. 3. 1. [f]Herod's jurisdiction, he sent Him to Herod, who himself also was at Jerusalem at that time.

8 And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding
h ch. 9. 9. glad: for [h]he was desirous to see Him of a long *sea-*
i Matt. 14. 1. Mark 6. 14. *son*, because [i]he had heard many things of Him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by Him.

9 Then he questioned with Him in many words; but He answered him nothing.

10 And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused Him.

k Isai. 53. 3. 11 [k]And Herod with his men of war set Him at

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6—12. Jesus sent to Herod.

7. "Herod." This was Herod Antipas, tetrarch, or ruler, of Galilee and Peræa (See on iii. 1.). It was this Herod who had beheaded St. John the Baptist. Being a Jew, he was now in Jerusalem to keep the Passover. It was customary among the Romans for a prisoner to be tried by the governor of the province in which the crime charged against him was committed. Still this was an act of courtesy on the part of Pilate, who might, had he pleased, have retained the case in his own hands, since our Lord's teaching had not been confined to Galilee, but had been in a great measure within Pilate's province of Judæa.

8. "He was exceeding glad." When Herod first heard the fame of our Lord's miracles, his superstitious fears made him think that John the Baptist was risen from the dead (See ix. 9.). No doubt he now laughed at this as a foolish fancy. But he had never before been face to face with the wonderful Man, of whom he had heard so much; and he had no doubt Jesus would be glad of the opportunity of displaying His miraculous power before him.

9. "He answered him nothing." So it was when Pilate asked Him, "Whence art Thou?" (See on St. John xix. 9.). Neither deserved an answer. Yet Herod deserved it less than Pilate. The heathen ruler had some sense of justice, and some desire to act fairly, and so our Lord spoke much with him on some points. The Jewish tetrarch's spirit was simply that of vain curiosity, so he neither deserved, nor received, a single word. Besides Herod was the murderer of St. John the Baptist, and at that very time living in the scandalous adultery for which the Baptist had rebuked him. How then could Jesus have spoken to him unless in righteous condemnation?

10. "Vehemently accused Him." That is, eagerly and urgently accused Him, bringing no doubt against Him the same charges as they had before Pilate.

11. "Herod with his men of war" &c. Herod plainly considered Jesus a mere object of mockery, and made light of the charges brought against Him (See 15.). His miserable wickedness is made clearer by his actually joining with the soldiers in the insults heaped on the innocent Head of his Prisoner. Already had our Lord suffered like

nought, and mocked *Him*, and arrayed Him in a gorgeous robe, and sent Him again to Pilate. A.D. 30.

12 And the same day [l] Pilate and Herod were made friends together: for before they were at enmity between themselves. [l] Acts 4. 27.

13 ¶ [m] And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people, [m] John 18. 38. & 19. 4.

14 said unto them, [n] Ye have brought this Man unto me, as one that perverteth the people: and, behold, [o] I, having examined *Him* before you, have found no fault in this Man touching those things whereof ye accuse Him: [n] ver. 1, 2. [o] ver. 4.

15 no, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him; and, lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto Him.

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insults from the servants of the High Priest (xxii. 63—65.), and again after this a third time He is exposed to the same shameful treatment by Pilate's soldiers (St. Matt. xxvii. 27—30.): but neither Caiaphas nor Pilate take any part in the cruelty. Truly "as a sheep before "her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth" (Isai. liii. 7.).

"Gorgeous." That is, 'splendid.' This robe was possibly the "scarlet" or "purple" one, in which Jesus was afterwards arrayed by the Roman soldiers (See on St. Matt. xxvii. 28.).

12. **"Pilate and Herod were made friends."** We do not know what had been the cause of their quarrel, but it has been thought it may have been connected with Pilate's outrage upon certain Galilæans, whom he appears to have fallen upon and slain when they were offering sacrifice (See xiii. 1.).

13—25. Jesus again before Pilate. Pilate's attempts to release Him.

St. Matt. xxvii. 15—26. St. Mark xv. 6—15. St. John xviii. 39, 40.

14. **"Having examined Him before you."** Part of the examination was in private in the judgment-hall, into which the Jews would not enter lest they should make themselves unclean (See St. John xviii. 28, 33. xix. 9.); but part was in the presence of the Chief Priests and other Jews, in front of the judgment-hall (See St. Matt. xxvii. 11—14.).

15. **"No, nor yet Herod."** Jew and Gentile alike declare Jesus to be innocent. Yet alike they persecute and reject Him (See Acts iv. 27.).

"Unto Him." This should be translated 'by Him', as the Greek word will bear either sense equally.

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15. "*Unto Him.*" The preposition is not expressed in the Greek, this being a precisely similar case to that in St. Matt. v. 21, where see *Note*.

A. D. 30. 16 [p] I will therefore chastise Him, and release *Him*.

[p] John 19. 1.

17 (For of necessity he must release one unto them at the feast.)

[q] Acts 3. 14. 18 And [q] they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this *Man*, and release unto us Barabbas:

19 (who for a certain sedition made in the city, and for murder, was cast into prison.)

20 Pilate therefore, willing to release Jesus, spake again to them.

21 But they cried, saying, Crucify *Him*, crucify Him.

22 And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath He done? I have found no cause of death in Him: I will therefore chastise Him, and let *Him* go.

23 And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that He might be crucified. And the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed.

[r] John 19. 16. [2] Or, *assented*, Exod. 23. 2. 24 And [r] Pilate [2] gave sentence that it should be as they required.

25 And he released unto them him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they had desired; but he delivered Jesus to their will.

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16. "**I will therefore chastise Him.**" Here Pilate begins to sacrifice justice, and to yield to the clamour of the Jews. They are quick to see his weakness, and to perceive that they have already won the victory. They have only to persist, and he will yield all they ask. What right had Pilate even to scourge an innocent man? If he could be driven into this iniquity, he could be driven into a greater.

23. "**Instant.**" That is, 'urgent'—'insisting.'

"**Prevailed.**" A weak, irresolute, hesitating, even if well-meaning, character is sure to be overborne by the force of a determined will and unflinching resolve. Christ's enemies were resolute in their attack; Pilate was irresolute in his defence. And so the evil prevailed. Thanks be to God who bringeth good out of evil, and useth the malice of men to work His glory and the world's salvation!

25. "**He released unto them**" &c. Observe how St. Peter contrasts Jesus and Barabbas: "Ye desired a murderer to be granted unto you, "and killed the Prince of life" (Acts iii. 14, 15.); that is, 'Ye chose 'him who was the author of death, and killed Him who is the Author of life.' "Oh mad folly", says St. Augustine, "to kill One who raised "the dead, and to release a murderer who slew the living!"

[Here follow the scourging of our Lord, and His mockery by the Roman soldiers, as related in the other Gospels.]

26 ¶ And as they led Him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear *it* after Jesus. A. D. 30.

27 And there followed Him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented Him.

28 But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for Me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.

29 [s] For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed *are* the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. [s] Matt. 24. 19. ch. 21. 23.

30 [t] Then shall they begin to say **to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us.** [t] Isai. 2. 19. Rev. 6. 16. & 9. 6. Hosea 10. 8.

26—49. The Crucifixion.

St. Matt. xxvii. 32—56. St. Mark xv. 20—41. St. John xix. 17—37.

26. "On him they laid the cross." So many a one, going about his ordinary work or occupation, suddenly finds a cross laid upon him. Blessed he who knows what it is he carries, whose steps he follows, and who has sent the burden!

28. "Daughters of Jerusalem." These women, who "bewailed "and lamented", were not the company of faithful women who followed our Lord from Galilee, but inhabitants of Jerusalem drawn together by the sight. It has been noticed that we have no single instance in the Gospels of a woman showing enmity to our Lord.

"Weep not for Me," &c. Jesus would turn their grief into a better channel. These women were not doing wrong in weeping for Christ. There is no rebuke in His words. Nay, His sufferings and His patience were well fitted to move their sympathy and their tears. But they had a yet more fitting cause for sorrow, had they known it, even the sufferings which were to come upon themselves and their children. For these sufferings Jesus bids them weep, that they may be roused to see the *cause* of them—even their own unbelief, and may even yet flee from the wrath to come.

29. "The days are coming." Our Lord is speaking of the awful punishment about to be inflicted on the Jews in the destruction of Jerusalem (See on the whole of St. Matt. xxiv. especially 19.).

30. "To the mountains, Fall on us;" &c. This prophetical description of extreme terror and anguish is applied by our Lord here firstly to the horrors of the destruction of Jerusalem, yet doubtless even here it is meant to carry on the thoughts to the infinitely more awful day of His own Personal coming to judgment, to which the words are specially applied in the Book of Revelation (vi. 16. See also on Rev. vi. 12.).

A.D. 30. 31 [u] For if they do these things in a green tree,
[u] Pro. 11. 31. what shall be done in the dry?
Jer. 25. 29. Ezek. 20. 47. & 21. 3, 4. 1 Pet. 4. 17. 32 [x] And there were also two other, malefactors,
led with Him to be put to death.
[x] Isai. 53. 12. 33 And when they were come to the place, which
[2] Or, *The place of a skull.* is called [2] Calvary, there they crucified Him, and the
malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other
on the left.
[y] Matt. 5. 44. Acts 7. 60. 1 Cor. 4. 12. 34 Then said Jesus, Father, [y] forgive them; for
[z] they know not what they do. And they parted His
[z] Acts 3. 17. raiment, and cast lots.
[a] Ps. 22. 17. Zech. 12. 10. 35 And [a] the people stood beholding. And the
rulers also with them derided *Him*, saying, He

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31. "If they do these things in a green tree," &c. These words are plainly of the nature of a proverb. Probably the saying was in common use. By the "green tree" our Lord means Himself, so unfit to suffer; by the "dry" the Jews, barren and fruitless and fit only for the axe and the fire. 'If the green and fruit-bearing tree is thus 'treated, what will become of the dry and dead tree?' 'If judgment 'begin with the holy and innocent, where shall the ungodly and the 'sinner appear?' But, it will be said, Was not Christ's suffering beyond all other? Not in one sense at any rate. For Christ *for the joy "that was set before Him* endured the cross, despising the shame" (Hebr. xii. 2.). The doomed sinner has no *hope* to lighten his sufferings. Christ's Cross was heavy to bear; but "God's wrath is heavier "to bear than Christ's Cross."

32. "Two other, malefactors." It is necessary carefully to observe the stop after "other" in this verse. Perhaps our more modern form 'others' would be clearer. "Malefactors" means 'evil-doers.'

34. "Father, forgive them;" &c. "Such is the revenge which "Jesus came to teach unto men." Thus did He make "intercession "for the transgressors" (Isaiah liii. 12.). This saying was probably spoken at the very beginning of the Crucifixion, perhaps while He was being nailed to the Cross. Of whom is it spoken? Firstly, no doubt, of those who were actually nailing Him to the Cross; but certainly not of them only. It would at the least include all such as joined *ignorantly* in His rejection and condemnation. But surely it may have a still wider and deeper meaning: for are not we all Christ's crucifiers through our sins? And, as we sorely need it, so may we not all ask for, and hope for, a share in this merciful intercession? Ignorance is allowed by God as an excuse *when not our own fault.* So it was in the case of St. Paul (1 Tim. i. 13.). But when ignorance is our own fault we are expressly told that it is "without excuse" (Rom. i. 18—20.).

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34. "*Father, forgive them;*" *&c.* For the seven Words on the Cross see on St. Matt. xxvii. 46.

saved others; let Him save Himself, if He be Christ, A.D. 30.
the chosen of God.

36 And the soldiers also mocked Him, coming to Him, and offering Him vinegar,

37 and saying, If Thou be the king of the Jews, save Thyself.

38 And a superscription also was written over Him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

39 And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on Him, saying, If Thou be Christ, save Thyself and us.

40 But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?

41 And we indeed justly; for we receive the due

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35. "**The chosen of God.**" This expression is used by the Jews to mean the Messiah, for it is so used by the prophet Isaiah (xlii. 1. quoted in St. Matt. xii. 18.).

36. "**Offering Him vinegar.**" This appears to be a different event from those recorded in the other Gospels (See on St. Matt. xxvii. 34 and 48.). Those were in compassion; this was in mockery. Those took place at the very beginning and the very end of the Crucifixion; this probably about the middle. It has been suggested that it may have been at the time of the soldiers' mid-day meal, and that they in mockery invited Jesus to drink with them of their sour wine, which was the common drink of the country.

38. "**Written over Him.**" It appears to have been customary to affix to the top of the cross on which any noted criminal was crucified a written statement of his crime.

39. "**If Thou be Christ, save Thyself and us.**" It is needless to observe that these words were spoken in unbelieving mockery. St. Matthew and St. Mark simply mention the fact of the thieves joining in the general mockery of our Lord, and St. Luke alone relates the penitence of the one of them. There is no positive need to believe that he at first joined with his companion in mocking, for though the first two Evangelists speak in the plural, they are speaking quite generally: and when it is said that "they that were crucified "with Him reviled Him" (St. Mark), it would be quite in accordance with a common mode of speaking, though it were actually done by only one of them. Still the afterwards penitent thief *may* at first have joined in the reviling, improbable as it would seem.

40. "**In the same condemnation.**" That is, suffering the same punishment, dying the same dreadful death, as myself, and as He whom thou revilest. There is nothing more awful than the blasphemy of a dying man.

41. "**We indeed justly.**" This poor thief has certainly the two

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38. "*Hebrew.*" See *Note* on St. John i. 42.

A.D. 30. reward of our deeds: but this Man hath done nothing amiss.

42 And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom.

43 And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with Me in paradise.

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great requisites of repentance and faith. He confesses the justice of his sentence, and this implies repentance; he flies to his Saviour for mercy, and this is faith.

42. "Lord, remember me" &c. "O wonderful faith of the penitent "thief! He sees Jesus condemned, and he addresses Him as a King: "he sees Him on the Cross, and he prays to Him as if He were seated "in heaven." Some saw Jesus raise the dead, and yet believed not: *he* saw Jesus dying, and believed. He saw to outward eye One dying as a malefactor like himself: he by faith believed that He would come in His kingdom to reign for ever.

43. "To day." The penitent thief received more than he asked. He asked to be remembered when Christ came in His kingdom. He received the promise of a blessedness that very day.

"With Me in Paradise." "Paradise" literally means a garden, and was used for the garden of Eden. Hence it came to signify the abode of rest and peace in which the souls of the faithful dead await their glorious resurrection (See on Rev. ii. 7.). The Jews often spoke of this place as "Abraham's bosom" (See on xvi. 22, 23.). We have here a distinct pledge that the souls of the dead are not (as some have supposed) in a state of sleep or unconsciousness between death and resurrection. But how is it said in our Creeds that, after death, Christ "descended "into hell"? To understand this we must remember that two quite different Greek words are both translated by the English word "hell." These are 1. 'Hades', which means the place of departed spirits, and 2. 'Gehenna', which means the place of torment. It is the former word which is used in the Creeds (See on Acts ii. 27. and 31. 1 St. Peter iii. 19. and Rev. i. 18.), and so when we say Christ "de-"scended into hell", we mean that His spirit went among the spirits of the dead. Thus (strange as it sounds at first) "Paradise" here, and "Hell" in our Creeds, mean precisely the same place; or perhaps, more strictly, while "Hell" signifies the *whole* world of spirits, or abode of the departed, "Paradise" signifies that *part* of Hades which is the abode of the spirits of the blest. It may be right to point out here that, according to the teaching of the Bible and of the Church, the soul does not pass into its final state, either of happiness or of misery, on leaving the body. It is quite plain that the penitent thief was not with our Lord *in heaven* on that day, since our Lord did not return to heaven till His Ascension (See St. John xx. 17.). Also the descriptions given us of the Judgment-day show clearly that *then*—when soul and body are united again for ever—the saved will enter into the perfect joy of their Lord, and the lost depart into endless fire.

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42. "*Into*." This would be more correctly translated 'in', the words doubtless referring to such expressions as that of St. Matt. xvi. 28., which expressions this thief had probably heard.

44 And it was about the sixth hour, and there A.D. 30.
was a darkness over all the [2]earth until the ninth hour.

[2] Or, *land.*

45 And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst.

46 And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, He said, [b] **Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit:** and having said thus, He gave up the ghost.

[b] 1 Pet. 2. 23.

Psalm 31. 5.

47 Now when the centurion saw what was done, He glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous Man.

48 And all the people that came together to that

It has been well and often observed that we have the case of this penitent finding mercy in the hour of death, that *none should despair;* but we have *only* this one case, that *none should presume.*

44. "**All the earth.**" Probably this does not mean the whole world, but simply all that land (See *Margin.*).

45. "**The sun was darkened.**" This is simply an addition to, or explanation of, the last verse, and not another darkness; and it would have been a better division to have made these words a part of the 44th verse.

The rending of the veil of the Temple seems to have been at the very moment of our Lord's death. Here it is named before, in St. Matthew's Gospel after, that awful moment.

46. "**When Jesus had cried**" &c. The cry here spoken of is probably that related by the first two Evangelists, "My God, My God, "why hast Thou forsaken Me?", just as the next words, "Father, "into Thy hands" &c. is probably the loud cry referred to by St. Matthew (xxvii. 50.). It is however very possible that the cry here spoken of is the "It is finished", or a mere cry of anguish without words.

"**Father, into Thy hands**" &c. This, like the cry, "My God, "My God," &c. is a quotation from the Psalms, the great book of Hebrew worship, rendered doubly precious to Christians by the fact that our dying Saviour thus drew from it His most solemn utterances. In the words before us Jesus plainly speaks of His *human* Spirit. That, when His work on earth was finished, He yielded up into the Hands of the everlasting Father. But not so that It should at once ascend to the abode of glory. It first "descended into hell", the abode of departed spirits (See on "Paradise" in 43.), and then was reunited to the Body at the Resurrection, and remained forty days on earth. But this we learn from the last words of Jesus on the Cross, that "the "souls of the righteous are in the Hand of God, and there shall no "torment touch them" (Wisd. iii. 1.).

47. "**A righteous Man.**" St. Matthew and St. Mark have "the "Son of God" in place of these words. The words "a righteous "Man" may be simply what the centurion intended by "Son of God," the full meaning of which expression he could not have understood; but there is no reason why he may not have both asserted our Lord's innocence, and declared Him to be the Son of God.

A. D. 30. sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts, and returned.

c Ps. 38. 11. 49 [c] And all His acquaintance, and the women that followed Him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things.

50 ¶ And, behold, *there was* a man named Joseph, a counsellor; *and he was* a good man, and a just:

51 (the same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them;) *he was* of Arimathæa, a city of the

d ch. 2. 25, 38. Jews: [d] who also himself waited for the kingdom of God.

52 This *man* went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus.

53 And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid.

e Matt. 27. 62. 54 And that day was [e] the preparation, and the sabbath drew on.

f ch. 8. 2. 55 And the women also, [f] which came with Him

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48. "Smote their breasts, and returned." Conscience-stricken perhaps, now the deed was past recall, by the sin and horror of their act, and terrified by the miracles which showed its awfulness.

50—56. The Burial.

St. Matt. xxvii. 57—61. St. Mark xv. 42—47. St. John xix. 38—42.

51. "The same had not consented" &c. He had either kept away from the meeting of the Council, at which Christ was accused and condemned, or else had refused his consent to their acts.

53. "Laid it in a sepulchre" &c. "Happy he who receives the "Body of Jesus Christ into a new and clean heart, and who takes "care to secure the door thereof against the spirit of the world" (*Quesnel.*). The sepulchre (as we learn from St. Matthew) was Joseph's "own new tomb." "It was in His death, as it had been in His life, "that the Son of man had not where to lay His Head" (*Is. Williams.*). He was homeless in life, and in death His very grave is another's.

54. "The preparation." That is the 'Friday' (See on St. Mark xv. 42. St. John xix. 14. and *Note* on St. Matt. xxvi. 17.).

"The sabbath drew on." The Jewish sabbath began at sunset on Friday.

55. "The women." Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Joses, as we learn from the other Gospels. The third Mary—the blessed Mother—has passed from our view, and only appears again in one brief glimpse after the Ascension (Acts i. 14.). These other two, with grief too great for fear, remain with the beloved Form to the last, following to the sepulchre, looking in to see "how His

from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how His body was laid. A.D. 30.

56 And they returned, and [g] prepared spices and ointments; and rested the sabbath day [h] according to the commandment. [g] Mark 16. 1. [h] Ex. 20. 10.

CHAPTER XXIV.

1 Christ's resurrection is declared by two angels to the women that come to the sepulchre. 9 These report it to others. 13 Christ Himself appeareth to the two disciples that went to Emmaus: 36 afterwards He appeareth to the apostles, and reproveth their unbelief: 47 giveth them a charge: 49 promiseth the Holy Ghost: 51 and so ascendeth into heaven.

NOW upon the first *day* of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, [a] bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain *others* with them. [a] ch. 23. 56.

2 And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre.

"Body was laid", and then (as St. Matthew tells us) "sitting over "against the sepulchre" in their sorrow, sitting being in the East the posture of mourning. Surely such love and faithfulness won from their Lord His first appearances after He was risen.

56. "Prepared spices and ointments." It seems doubtful whether they did this in the short time between the Burial and sunset, which was the commencement of the Sabbath, or after sunset on the Sabbath, that is, as we should say, on the Saturday evening. St. Luke seems to state the former, but the order of the words need not be pressed so strictly, and he may possibly mean that the women returned and prepared the spices and ointments, though not without observing the commandment by resting during the Sabbath. This agrees best with St. Mark's account (See on St. Mark xvi. 1.). We may notice that while the two holy men, Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathæa, hastily wrapped the sacred Body in the myrrh and aloes they had bought (See on St. John xix. 39, 40.), it was more peculiarly woman's work to see that the anointing or embalmment was properly completed. Yet that sacred Body needed no such aids, for it could not see corruption.

"Rested the sabbath day" &c. The commandment is based upon the mysterious fact of God's resting on the seventh day. We know not what was this rest of God; but now we see a rest of God in a new sense, for He who was in the beginning with God, and who "was God", is now resting His Sabbath rest, His work and His sufferings ended.

CHAPTER XXIV.

1—12. The Resurrection.

St. Matt. xxviii. 1—8. St. Mark xvi. 1—8. St. John xx. 1—10.

1. "Very early in the morning." Literally 'at deep dawn', which would mean before actual daylight.

A. D. 30.

3 [b] And they entered in, and found not the body
[b] ver. 23. of the Lord Jesus.

4 And it came to pass, as they were much per-
[c] Acts 1. 10. plexed thereabout, [c] behold, two men stood by them
in shining garments:

5 And as they were afraid, and bowed down *their*
faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek
[2] Or, *him that liveth.* ye [2] the living among the dead?

[d] Matt. 16. 21. & 17. 23. Mark 8. 31. & 9. 31. ch. 9. 22. 6 He is not here, but is risen: [d] remember how
He spake unto you when He was yet in Ga-
lilee,

7 saying, The Son of man must be delivered into
the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the
third day rise again.

[e] John 2. 22. 8 And [e] they remembered His words,

[f] Mark 16. 10. 9 [f] and returned from the sepulchre, and told all
these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest.

[g] ch. 8. 3. 10 It was Mary Magdalene, and [g] Joanna, and

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4. "Two men." Angels, that is, in human form. St. Mark describes the one who spoke to the women as "a young man." St. Luke alone names the fact that there were *two* Angels, just as St. Matthew alone tells us that there were two demoniacs at Gadara (See on St. Matt. viii. 28.). We learn in the two earlier Gospels several facts with regard to one of the Angels, and it is probable that the other stood apart and did not speak. Some have thought that St. Matthew speaks of one and St. Mark of the other of the two Angels here mentioned together, but this seems very improbable, since in each of the two Gospels the Angel is reported to speak the same thing.

5. "Why seek ye" &c. "The living" is here in the singular number, and means 'the living One.' The grave was not the place to seek Him who is "the Resurrection and the Life," and who says of Himself, "I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive "for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death" (Rev. i. 18.). Equally vain is it to seek Christ among those who are "dead "in trespasses and sins" (Eph. ii. 1.), or in a heart which is like a sepulchre "full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness" (St. Matt. xxiii. 27.).

6. "Yet in Galilee." Whence the women had come with our Lord to Jerusalem (xxiii. 55.). The Angels remind the women of our Lord's words, as well as of the place of their being spoken, as though themselves perfectly familiar with these things. Can we doubt that these heavenly beings had continually watched the actions and heard the words of Jesus, though themselves unseen? The Angels' message to the disciples telling them that Christ would go before them into Galilee, and that they should see Him there, is not given by St. Luke.

10. "Joanna." Wife of Chuza, Herod's steward (See on viii. 2.).

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10. "*Mary the mother of James.*" See on St. Mark xv. 40 and 47.

Mary *the mother* of James, and other *women that* A.D. 30.
were with them, which told these things unto the apostles.

11 [h] And their words seemed to them as idle tales, [h] ver. 25. Mark 16. 11.
and they believed them not.

12 Then arose Peter, and ran unto the sepulchre; and stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass.

13 ¶ And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem *about* threescore furlongs.

14 And they talked together of all these things which had happened.

15 And it came to pass, that, while they communed *together* and reasoned, [i] Jesus Himself drew [i] ver. 36. Matt. 18. 20.
near, and went with them.

"Other women." Literally 'the other women.' We know from St. Mark that Salome, the wife of Zebedee, was one of these (See St. Matt. xxvii. 56.).

11. "They believed them not." For this our Lord afterwards rebuked them (St. Mark xvi. 14.).

12. "Then arose Peter." This is plainly the same visit to the sepulchre as that related more fully by St. John (xx. 3—10.), in which he ran together with St. John, though this fact is not mentioned here. But, even if we had not St. John's account, we might suppose from the expression "certain of them which were with us" (in 24.), where the same event is related by the disciples going to Emmaus, that more than one ran to the sepulchre.

"Stooping down," &c. St. Peter did more than this; he actually went into the sepulchre, for from the more minute account of St. John we find that St. John who arrived first, "stooping down, and looking in, "saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in." The more eager and forward St. Peter, as soon as he came up, at once went into the sepulchre, and saw the position of the linen clothes more accurately (St. John xx. 3—7.).

13—35. The appearance to the two disciples as they went to Emmaus.

St. Mark xvi. 12.

13. "Emmaus." The exact position of this village is not known. It was seven and a half miles from Jerusalem, and probably to the North-west. The name means 'Hot-springs.'

15. "Jesus Himself drew near." He joined them as though He were a fellow-traveller journeying the same way.

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15. "*Communed*." The Greek word here is the same as that translated "talked" in the verse before.

A.D. 30 16 But [k] their eyes were holden that they should
[k] John 20. 14. & 21. 4. not know Him.

17 And He said unto them, What manner of communications *are* these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?

[l] John 19. 25. 18 And the one of them, [l] whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto Him, Art Thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?

19 And He said unto them, What things? And they said unto Him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth,

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16. "Their eyes were holden." It was Christ's will not to reveal Himself as yet to them. Thus He restrained their eyes from knowing Him, by appearing to them "in another form" (See on St. Mark xvi. 12.). In what particular His appearance was different we are not told, but the change was sufficient to prevent their recognizing Him during a long walk and conversation, even when His words deeply moved them. One change which may be noted in our Lord's risen Body seems to be that men could no longer see Him when *they* pleased, but only when *He* pleased to show Himself to them.

17. "What manner of communications" &c. We may imagine Jesus to have walked a few moments by their side, as they talked, and then to have asked with gentle kindly sympathy the subject of the conversation which made them so sorrowful.

18. "Cleopas." This name is spelt differently from that in St. John (See *Note* on St. John xix. 25.), and it is a question whether the same person is meant. It is so common to find slightly different forms of the same name that the difference of spelling is no decisive reason against their being the same. There is nothing to give us any hint as to who the other of the two disciples was.

"Art Thou only a stranger" &c. The disciples are so full of their sorrow that they cannot understand how any one should fail to guess its cause, unless indeed he were ignorant of what had taken place, and this is no less difficult to imagine.

19. "What things?" Thus would our Lord draw out the whole sorrow from their hearts that He might heal it. When we are in trouble, let us tell Him all. True, He knows it better than we do: yet He would have us tell it. It is with sorrow, as with sin. We confess, not for His sake, but for our own; not that *He* may know our sins better, but that *we* may feel them more. So if we did not tell out our troubles, we should not realize the blessedness of Christ's sympathy, and the relief of the removal of the burden.

"They said." The conversation with Christ was not kept up by Cleopas alone. Probably both joined in it.

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18. "*Art Thou only a stranger*" &c. This would be more correctly translated, 'Art 'Thou the only person sojourning at 'Jerusalem who is ignorant of these 'things?' In other words, 'Art Thou 'alone ignorant of what every one else 'in Jerusalem knows?'

[m] which was a Prophet [n] mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: A.D. 30.

20 [o] and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and have crucified Him.

21 But we trusted [p] that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to day is the third day since these things were done.

22 Yea, and [q] certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre;

23 and when they found not His body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that He was alive.

24 And [r] certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found *it* even so as the women had said: but Him they saw not.

25 Then He said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken:

[m] Matt. 21. 11. ch. 7. 16. John 3. 2. & 4. 19. & 6. 14. Acts 2. 22.
[n] Acts 7. 22.
[o] ch. 23. 1. Acts 13. 27, 28.
[p] ch. 1. 68. & 2. 38. Acts 1. 6.
[q] ver. 9, 10. Matt. 28. 8. John 20. 18.
[r] ver. 12.

"A Prophet." They do not say 'the Messiah', perhaps because they think His Death has proved that their hope that He was the Messiah was vain. That He was "a Prophet mighty in deed and word" was plain, whatever His end might be.

"Before God." By a Prophet mighty before God they probably meant such a Prophet as could only do His mighty deeds in God's power. Compare St. Peter's words on the Day of Pentecost, "A Man "approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, "which God did by Him" (Acts ii. 22.).

21. "Redeemed Israel." No doubt these two shared in the common error of Christ's disciples, and looked for a temporal deliverance of their nation from the power of the Romans, and a restoration to temporal power and glory, such as the kingdom enjoyed under Solomon. Even up to the Ascension this hope had not left them, for we read that immediately before that event the Apostles "asked of Him, saying, "Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts i. 6.).

"To day is the third day." Whether these disciples had any recollection of Christ's prophecy of His Resurrection on the third day does not appear. Possibly, by their going on to relate the reports that had reached them by the women, we may suppose they had some dim remembrance of it, but, like St. Peter and St. John themselves (St. John xx. 9.), had not understood the meaning of the words, and now scarcely dared to hope that they might find the true meaning in what the women had said.

24. "Certain of them which were with us." Namely St. Peter and St. John (See on 12.).

25. "O fools, and slow of heart." How startling must this address

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22. "*Certain women.*" See on 10.

26 [s] ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?

27 [t] And beginning at [u] Moses and [x] all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself.

28 And they drew nigh unto the village, whither

[s] ver. 46. Acts 17. 3. 1 Pet. 1. 11.
[t] ver. 45.
[u] Gen. 3. 15. & 22. 18. & 26. 4. & 49. 10. Num. 21. 9. Deut. 18. 15.
[x] Ps. 16. 9, 10. & 22. & 132. 11. Isai. 7. 14. & 9. 6. & 40. 10. 11. & 50. 6. & 53. Jer. 23. 5. & 33. 14, 15. Ezek. 34. 23. & 37. 25. Dan. 9. 24. Mic. 7. 20. Mal. 3. 1. & 4. 2. See on John 1. 45.

have been. The mysterious Stranger at once assumes a new character, and becomes the Teacher, rebuking with authority, and astounding with His wisdom. Long ago they should have learnt how the prophets spoke of Christ, for had He not Himself commanded them to learn this? "Search the Scriptures; for . . . they are they which "testify of Me" (St. John v. 39.). Now that all was fulfilled, that testimony was clearer and mightier still: and to that testimony of the written word Christ, the living Word, now in His mercy takes them.

26. "Ought not Christ" &c. The two disciples had not used the word 'Christ' or 'Messiah.' They were perplexed as to whether the mighty "Prophet", whom they had seen die, could really be the expected Messiah. He Himself at once sets this doubt at rest for them. He does not begin to prove that their "Prophet" is the Christ, but, instantly calling Him so, shows them that the very things which shook their faith so terribly were the actual proofs of His Messiahship, because the very things prophesied of the Messiah.

Our Lord's question means, 'Was it not necessary that Christ should 'suffer?'—necessary, that is, in fulfilment of the sayings of the Prophets (See on 46.).

"To have suffered these things, and to enter" &c. The latter words do not mean that Christ *had* as yet entered into His glory. The Ascension, not the Resurrection, was the entering into His glory. We must take the question as one, linking together the suffering and the glory, as if it were, 'Was it not necessary (in order that the Scripture 'might be fulfilled) that Christ's path to glory should be through suffering?' Mark how St. Peter also links together the suffering and the glory of Christ, when he says that the Spirit of Christ which was in the prophets "testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that "should follow" (1 St. Peter i. 11.). If we would reach the same glory, we must not shrink from the same path. So our Church speaks, in words of comfort to her sick members, saying: "Christ Himself went "not up to joy, but first He suffered pain; He entered not into His "glory before He was crucified. So truly our way to eternal joy is to "suffer here with Christ; and our door to enter into eternal life is "gladly to die with Christ" (*Visitation of the Sick.*). The same thought has been summed up in four short words, "No Cross, no crown."

27. "Beginning at Moses" &c. Our Lord's setting forth of Himself in the Old Testament must not be thought to refer only to what we understand by direct prophecies, such as that of Moses concerning the Prophet like unto himself (Deut. xviii. 15.), but would include also all the teaching of types, and of history. Thus we can hardly doubt that He would point out the significance of the Paschal lamb, and of the whole history of the deliverance from Egypt. After such witness, "the denial of the references to Christ's death and glory in the Old

they went: and [y] He made as though He would have gone further. A.D. 30.

29 But [z] they constrained Him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And He went in to tarry with them.

30 And it came to pass, as He sat at meat with them, [a] He took bread, and blessed *it*, and brake, and gave to them.

[y] See Gen. 32. 26. & 42. 7. Mark 6. 48.
[z] Gen. 19. 3. Acts 16. 15.
[a] Matt. 14. 19.

"Testament is" (as Alford well says) "nothing less than a denial "of Christ's own teaching."

28. "He made as though He would have gone further." He moved on, as if proceeding on His way, in order to draw out their request that He would stay. Doubtless, had the request not been made, He would have passed on; and so the act of seeming to be going on was simply a sort of question; 'Shall we part here?' From how many has the Saviour passed on, because, when He has spoken to them and moved their hearts, they have not constrained Him to abide with them!

29. "They constrained Him." They pressed Him strongly. This does not imply any resistance or unwillingness on His part, but only their eager pressing of their request that He would remain. Christ is a willing Guest of those who love His company.

"Toward evening," &c. It was not so late but that the two disciples had time to walk back to Jerusalem, which would take them about two hours, in time for the events related afterwards.

30. "He took bread," &c. It has been a frequent subject of dispute whether our Lord was celebrating the blessed Sacrament on this occasion, or not. Although it would be wrong to speak positively where there is room for doubt, yet it is difficult to resist the common impression that He was repeating with the two disciples the Sacramental "breaking of bread", which He had solemnly instituted at His Paschal supper. The very words—"took" and "blessed" and "brake" and "gave"—are strikingly like a description of the same act; while the words in which the two disciples related the act, when they told how Jesus was "known of them in the *breaking of bread*" (35.), are the very words by which the Sacrament of the holy Communion was called in the Apostolic times (See Acts ii. 42.). Another strong reason in favour of this view is the fact that Christ made Himself known to the disciples in this "breaking of bread." It would seem that the act by which they were permitted to recognize Him must have had in it something specially solemn and important. Possibly they had heard from the Apostles the account of the institution of the Lord's Supper, and we can well imagine that, if they saw the mysterious Stranger beginning to do what they had heard Christ had done then, the truth would flash into their minds; especially if they recalled His strange sayings, spoken at Capernaum about a year before, concerning Himself as the "Bread of Life" (See St. John vi.). Still we must not fail to notice that they knew Him, not so much from any act which *in itself* revealed Him, as because "their eyes were opened", being "holden" no longer. They knew Him because He willed then to be known.

A.D. 30. 31 And their eyes were opened, and they knew
2 Or, *ceased to be seen of them.* See chap. 4. 30. John 8. 59. Him; and He [2] vanished out of their sight.
32 And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the scriptures?
33 And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them,
b 1 Cor. 15. 5. 34 saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and [b] hath appeared to Simon.
35 And they told what things *were done* in the way, and how He was known of them in breaking of bread.
c 1 Cor. 15. 5. 36 ¶ [c] And as they thus spake, Jesus Himself

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31. "He vanished out of their sight." This is quite in accordance with the changed and spiritualized nature of our Lord's Body after His Resurrection; and with the fact that He shortly afterwards suddenly appeared among the disciples when the doors were shut (See on St. John xx. 19.). Our Lord seems to have made Himself invisible—He "hid "Himself"—on a former occasion (St. John viii. 59.), but we are expressly told then that He passed "through the midst" of the people, probably walking among them, as at other times, only holding their eyes (See on 16.) so that they should not see Him. Here His vanishing was not only rendering Himself invisible, but actually passing away.

32. "Did not our heart burn within us." This they say as reproaching themselves for not sooner recognizing their Lord. It is as much as to say, 'We might have guessed who it was, when His words 'kindled such a fire in our hearts.'

33. "Them that were with them." That is, the holy women and our Lord's "brethren" (See Acts i. 14.).

34. "Hath appeared to Simon." We know nothing whatever concerning this appearance of our Lord to St. Peter. It is again mentioned by St. Paul (1 Cor. xv. 5.).

35. "Known of them in breaking of bread." So does He even now reveal Himself to many a faithful communicant, bestowing a fresh and vivid sense of His presence and His love. It appears (from St. Mark xvi. 13.) that the Apostles hesitated to believe the story told by the two disciples, even though they had greeted them, as they entered, with the news "The Lord is risen indeed." We can well conceive that throughout this wonderful day the minds of all would be in a state of much confusion and perplexity with mingled hopes and fears.

36—43. Appearance to the assembled Apostles with certain others (Thomas being absent) on the evening of the Resurrection.

St. Mark xvi. 14. St. John xx. 19—23.

stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, A.D. 30.
Peace *be* unto you.

37 But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen [d] a spirit. [d] Mark 6. 49.

38 And He said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?

39 Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself: [e] handle Me, and see; for a spirit hath [e] John 20. 27.
not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have.

40 And when He had thus spoken, He shewed them *His* hands and *His* feet.

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36. "Stood in the midst of them." This (as St. John tells us) was "when the doors were shut." Our Lord now appeared, as He had disappeared at Emmaus, miraculously, that is, not according to the ordinary laws of bodily motion.

37. "Terrified." This terror would lead us to think that there was as yet no clear belief in the Resurrection, at least in the minds of many of the Apostles (See on 35.). They supposed they saw a "spirit" (See Acts xii. 15.) from the sudden, noiseless, and mysterious, appearance of our Lord in the midst of them, when no door had opened to admit Him. Even His "Peace be unto you" was not at first enough to calm their terror.

38. "Why do thoughts arise." By "thoughts" our Lord means questionings as to whether He were really risen, and whether the Form they looked upon were really His, or, as they at first imagined, a "spirit."

39. "Behold My hands and My feet." St. John says that "He "showed unto them His hands and His Side." Thus we see that He vouchsafed to show them the five sacred wounds of His Crucifixion. Well may we think of the prophet's words when we contemplate this wonderful scene: "One shall say unto him, What are these wounds "in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was "wounded in the house of my friends" (Zech. xiii. 6.).

"Handle Me." The proof of touch is permitted in addition to that of sight, that there may be no doubt as to the *reality* of the risen Body of the Lord. One of the chief heresies in the primitive Church was that which taught, in direct contradiction to this and other passages, that Christ was only an appearance, or phantom, having no real body, and therefore enduring no real sufferings. This risen Body of the Lord was the same in which He suffered, in which He ascended, and in which He now sitteth at the right hand of God. Behold the pledge we thus receive that we too in our flesh shall see God (Job xix. 26.). How a Body, having "flesh and bones", could pass into a room with closed doors we know not. Indeed we know as yet but very little concerning that "spiritual body" (1 Cor. xv. 44.) in which we hope to rise. But "we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; "who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto "His glorious Body, according to the working whereby He is able "even to subdue all things unto Himself" (Phil. iii. 20. 21.),

A.D. 30. 41 And while they yet believed not [f] for joy,
[f] Gen. 45. 26. and wondered, He said unto them, [g] Have ye here
[g] John 21. 5. any meat?

42 And they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb.

[h] Acts 10. 41. 43 [h] And He took *it*, and did eat before them.
[i] ver. 6. Matt. 16. 21. & 17. 22. & 20. 18. Mark 8. 31. ch. 9. 22. & 18. 31.

44 ¶ And He said unto them, [i] These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which

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41. "Believed not for joy." This "believed not" is spoken of no obstinate or sinful unbelief; and the cause of it—"for joy"—gives the secret of all the doubting and hesitation of this great day. The news of the Resurrection, coming first by one and then by another, was too blessed to be believed.

"Have ye here any meat?" Our Lord's asking for, and partaking of, food was not to satisfy any want of His, but to give yet farther proof of the reality of His bodily existence.

[It should be noticed that St. John adds, in his account of this same appearance of our Lord, the very important particulars concerning the giving of the Holy Ghost, and of the power of remitting sin.]

44—49. Brief account of our Lord's teaching during the great forty days.

Acts i. 2—8.

44. "These *are* the words." That is, 'This is the fulfilment of 'the words'. When Christ had told them that all things written of Him in the Old Testament must be fulfilled, they had not understood how much His words meant (See xviii. 31—34.). He now shows them that all the strange and startling events they had lately witnessed—His Sufferings, His Death, His Resurrection,—were a perfect fulfilment of ancient prophecy (See on 27.).

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44. "*And He said unto them.*" If we had no Gospel but St. Luke's, we should suppose the whole of the remaining verses to the end of the 49th to refer to the same occasion as those next before, namely to the appearance on the evening of the Resurrection, and also that the Ascension, related in 50 and 51, followed immediately afterwards. St. Luke however himself corrects this latter notion in the beginning of the Acts of the Apostles, where He speaks of our Lord being seen "forty days" (Acts i. 3.), while it is clear the conversation to the end of the 49th verse could not have taken place on the evening of the Resurrection, because the 49th verse relates the command to the Apostles to *remain in Jerusalem* till they received the Holy Ghost on the Day of Pentecost, whereas from the other Evangelists we learn that the Apostles were first to go *into Galilee*, and to meet our Lord there, and that the command to remain in Jerusalem was not given till after the return from Galilee. [It is observable that St. Luke entirely omits all mention of the visit to Galilee and the appearances of our Lord there (See St. John xxi.), both in the message of the angels by the women, and in his history of the events themselves.] It is plain then that there must be some break in the history between verses 36 and 49, and it seems best to make it at the end of 43, and to regard the rest of the passage (44—49) as a brief record, or summary, of our Lord's teaching during the forty days of His risen life on earth.

were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning Me. A.D. 30.

45 Then [k] opened He their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,

46 and said unto them, [l] Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:

47 and that repentance and [m] remission of sins should be preached in His name [n] among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

48 And [o] ye are witnesses of these things.

49 [p] And, behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

[k] Acts 16. 14.
[l] ver. 26. Ps. 22. Isai. 50. 6. & 53. 2, &c. Acts 17. 3.
[m] Dan. 9. 24. Acts 13. 38, 46. 1 John 2. 12.
[n] Gen. 12. 3. Ps. 22. 27. Isai. 49. 6, 22. Jer. 31. 34. Hos. 2. 23. Micah 4. 2. Mal. 1. 11.
[o] John 15. 27. Acts 1. 22. & 2. 32. & 3. 15.
[p] Isai. 44. 3. Joel 2. 28. John 14. 16, 26. & 15. 26. & 16. 7. Acts 1. 4. & 2. 1, &c.

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46. "It behoved Christ to suffer." This means, 'It was needful 'that Christ should suffer'—needful, that is, in the fulfilment of prophecy. So our Lord asks, "Ought not Christ to have suffered?" (26.).

47. "Repentance and remission of sins." Repentance is not only the cry of the fore-runner. It is the cry of the Saviour Himself (See on St. Mark i. 15.), and it must be the preaching of the Church to the end. For repentance is the first step of the sinner towards the Saviour. Remission, or forgiveness, of sins is here closely coupled with repentance, for a true repentance wins the grace of pardon. But only "in His Name"; that is, through faith in Him. (See farther as to the remission of sins on St. John xx. 23.)

"Beginning at Jerusalem." Because it was God's will that the offer of salvation should be made to the Jew first, and only afterwards to the Gentile. This verse was most literally fulfilled, for St. Peter, in preaching at Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost, says, "Repent, "and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ for "the remission of sins" (Acts ii. 38.). And we find that the spirit of the words was observed throughout the history of the Acts of the Apostles, even the Apostle of the Gentiles constantly making his first appeal, in the cities which he visited, to the Jews.

48. "Ye are witnesses of these things." Observe, when one was to be chosen to fill the place of the traitor Judas, he was to be one who had been an eye-witness of the things he was to teach (Acts i. 21, 22.). So the Apostles spoke not from hearsay when they preached "Jesus Christ and Him crucified", but declared only that which they had heard, which they had seen with their eyes, which they had looked upon, and their hands had handled (1 St. John i. 1.).

49. "The promise." Namely, of the Holy Ghost the Comforter, by whose descent upon them they were to be "endued"—that is, clothed—"with power from on high."

"Tarry ye in the city." These words could not have been spoken till after the return from Galilee (See *Note* on 44.). Indeed we gather from St. Luke's farther account in the Acts (i. 4, 5.) that the words

A.D. 30. 50 ¶ And He led them out [q] as far as to Bethany,
[q] Acts 1. 12. and He lifted up His hands, and blessed them.
[r] 2 Kings 2. 11. John 20. 17. Eph. 4. 8. 51 [r] And it came to pass, while He blessed them, He was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.
[s] Matt. 28. 9, 17. 52 [s] And they worshipped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy:

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were spoken very shortly before the Ascension, for the promised Comforter was to be sent down to the Apostles "not many days" afterwards. The Day of Pentecost was ten days after the Ascension.

50—53. The Ascension.

St. Mark xvi. 19. Acts i. 9.

50. "As far as to Bethany." That is, to the neighbourhood of Bethany, which lay on the farther side of the Mount of Olives from Jerusalem (See on St. Matt. xxi. 1. and *Map.*).

"He lifted up His hands, and blessed them." Our Lord's last act on earth is to bless. Even as He ascends, His Hands are stretched out in blessing. And we may think of Him still in that His parting attitude, for from the right hand of God He is evermore shedding down His blessings upon His Church.

51. "Carried up." Not by any other power, but by His own Divine will. It was of this wondrous exaltation of our Incarnate God to the throne of His glory that Daniel saw a vision, in which he beheld "one like the Son of man", who "came with the clouds of heaven, and "came to the Ancient of days, and they brought Him near before "Him" (Dan. vii. 13.). It was of this triumphal return of the Saviour to the highest heavens that the Psalmist sang, when He said, "Lift "up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, "and the King of glory shall come in" (Ps. xxiv. 7.): and again, "Thou art gone up on high, Thou hast led captivity captive, and "received gifts for men" (Ps. lxviii. 18.): and again, "The Lord said "unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand until I make Thine "enemies Thy footstool" (Ps. cx. 1.). It is wonderful that the high Festival of the Church on which this glorious event is celebrated has come to be so lightly regarded. It is surely a day to be much observed for the heavenly hope which it sets before us. If the Resurrection of the Lord should fill us with holy joy as the pledge of our own resurrection, so too should the Ascension of the Lord as a pledge that we too shall follow Him to His home of glory. We should not fail to notice the spiritual lesson so beautifully drawn from this event in the Collect for Ascension-Day, which prays that, "like as we do believe . . . Jesus "Christ to have ascended into the heavens, so we may also in heart "and mind thither ascend, and with Him continually dwell."

52. "Worshipped Him." As truly God, exalted to the right hand of the Father. It is of infinite importance that we should think of our ascended Lord in His twofold nature, as still in heaven perfect Man and perfect God. Thither He has carried up our human nature for ever glorified in Him, and so He is One who can pity and feel for us. There too He sits in His Divine glory, the object of worship

53 and were continually [t] in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen. A.D. 30.

[t] Acts 2. 46. & 5. 42.

and adoration to His Church below. "The Lord is in His holy tem-"ple: the Lord's seat is in heaven. His eyes consider the poor: and "His eyelids try the children of men" (Ps. xi. 4, 5.).

"With great joy." For now they could no longer doubt of their Lord's power and glory. He had said to them, "If ye loved Me, ye "would rejoice, because I said, I go to the Father" (St. John xiv. 28.); and now they had seen Him go to the Father, and this their joy was fulfilled.

53. "Continually in the temple." Doubtless at all hours of prayer, and probably also at other times.

53. "*Amen.*" See on last word of St. Matthew's Gospel.

THE GOSPEL

ACCORDING TO

SAINT JOHN.

COMMENTARY.

TITLE.

St. John.—We know far more concerning St. John than concerning any other of the four Evangelists. He was son of Zebedee and Salome, and brother of St. James the Great. He was a fisherman on the sea of Galilee, living probably at Bethsaida, "the city of Andrew "and Peter" (i. 44.), with whom James and John were partners (St. Luke v. 10.). The sons of Zebedee were doubtless among the first called of our Lord's disciples, though of their first interview with Him we seem to have no account, unless the one of St. John the Baptist's disciples who heard him point out Christ as the Lamb of God, and whose name is not given (i. 40.), is understood to be St. John himself (See on St. Matt. iv. 19.). The facts that Zebedee had "hired servants" (St. Mark i. 20.), that Salome was one of the women who followed our Lord from Galilee, and "ministered "unto Him of their substance", and who also bought spices for His anointing at His burial (St. Mark xvi. 1, compare St. Luke viii. 3. and xxiii. 55.), and perhaps also the fact of our Lord's commending His blessed Mother to St. John's care at the Crucifixion, seem to show that the Apostle's family was not quite one of the poorest class.

St. John was from the first among those nearest and dearest to our Lord. Not only was he one of the twelve Apostles, but he was one of the three chosen witnesses of our Lord's greatest glory and deepest humiliation upon earth, in the Transfiguration and the Agony in Gethsemane, as well as of the miracle of the Raising of Jairus' daughter. He delights to call himself (as who would not that might?) "the disciple whom Jesus loved." He lay on Jesus' bosom at the Paschal Supper. To him (as has been said above) the Lord committed the care of His own mother when He died.

We find St. John with St. Peter at Jerusalem shortly after the descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost (Acts iii. and iv.), and afterwards sent with him to bestow the laying on of hands upon the Samaritan converts (Acts viii.). From this time we have but very scanty hints as to St. John's history in holy Scripture. He is found at Jerusalem some time later with St. James "the Lord's brother" and St. Peter (Gal. ii. 9.), and himself states that he wrote the Book of the Revelation in the Island of Patmos (Rev. i. 9.).

The early writers of the Church relate many traditions concerning St. John. It appears certain that his later years were passed at

Ephesus, with the exception of the time spent in banishment in Patmos, and that he died a natural death in extreme old age. He is said to have died at the age of 100, and to have been born in the same year as our Lord. Probably he was the youngest of the Apostles. He is supposed to have presided over the Churches of Asia Minor (in which province Ephesus was the chief city) after the martyrdom of St. Paul. It is a tradition too beautiful to be omitted, and too much in accordance with St. John's character and writings to be discredited, that in his extreme old age he constantly repeated the words, "Little children, love one another", and that these were the last words he uttered as he died.

Besides his Gospel, St. John wrote the three Epistles bearing his name, and the Revelation.

St. John's writings were all of a late date. His Gospel was undoubtedly written long after the other three.

The object of St. John's Gospel is to record the deeper spiritual truths of our Lord's teaching, and especially those relating to His own nature and Person. St. John sets forth our Lord as God. He himself tells us the object he had in view when he says, "These "are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the "Son of God; and that, believing, ye might have life through His "Name" (xx. 31.). This Gospel is the great Gospel of doctrine, as the others are of history. Our Lord's discourses are more fully given in this than in the others:—His actions much less so. The parables (though see on xv. 1.) are wholly omitted.

St. John writes for the use of more mature and advanced Christians. The earlier Gospels embody the simpler teaching (the facts of our Lord's life, His popular discourses and parables) which was most necessary in the first preaching of the Gospel for the instruction of new converts. St. John supplies the deeper teaching, the more sacred and heavenly revelations of the Saviour, which were needful for the "perfecting of the saints" in their holy faith. His Gospel is as the holy of holies in the Tabernacle. He takes us behind the veil.

It is sometimes said that St. John wrote his Gospel purposely to supply what was omitted by the other Evangelists. This is a very unworthy view to take of it. No doubt St. John's teaching from the first had a different aim from that of the others. Probably he set himself all through his life to the task of instructing the more advanced Christians in the deeper and more spiritual doctrines of their religion. This teaching he committed to writing in his old age, that it might not be lost or perverted. This would account for the difference between this Gospel and the others.

In treating of the deep mysteries which we meet with in this Gospel we should naturally expect to find it more difficult than the other three. Its language is indeed sublime and awful, as are the subjects of which it speaks; but we must not forget that this language is for the most

part not St. John's but our Lord's own, recorded by one who heard it, and into whose loving heart it entered deeply, to abide there evermore.

It is however impossible to understand many things in St. John's writings without remembering that in his time heresies concerning our Lord's nature, and other vital truths, were widely taught by the sect of the Gnostics, so that his Gospel (and still more his 1st Epistle) has frequent reference to these perversions of the truth. The chief leader of this great heresy in St. John's lifetime was Cerinthus, who held that Jesus was a mere man, but that at His Baptism the Divine Being Christ descended upon Him, remaining with Him till shortly before His death, and then leaving Him again, thus entirely destroying the doctrines of the Incarnation and of the Atonement.

In the emblems of the four Evangelists (See Introduction to St. Matthew) the Eagle is always allowed to represent St. John, and most fitly, for, like the eagle, he soars high above the earth, basking in the pure sunlight of divine truth.

St. John's Gospel relates almost entirely to our Lord's ministry in Judæa. The only exceptions are part of chapter ii. and chapters iv. and vii.; but such events as these chapters contain are plainly recorded chiefly for the sake of the great conversations connected with them.

The Gospel may be divided into two nearly equal parts, the first eleven chapters being a record of some of the most remarkable events and discourses of our Lord during the great three years of His ministry; and the last ten chapters being a history of the week of our Lord's Passion together with His Resurrection. The former portion may be again subdivided thus: i—iv.—Early Ministry in Judea, with two brief visits to Galilee, occupying the first nine months of the first year of the three. v. Our Lord's second Passover (See on v. 1.). vi. Our Lord's third Passover (See on vii. 1.). vii—xi. Discourses &c. towards the close of our Lord's third year, his fourth (last) Passover drawing near.

This Gospel was written in Greek, and, being written after the destruction of Jerusalem, and when the Church of Christ was establishing itself far and wide, it naturally contains far less that is Jewish than the others; while, as in St. Mark's Gospel, Jewish words or expressions are carefully explained.

The Collect for St. John the Evangelist's Day.

MERCIFUL Lord, we beseech Thee to cast Thy bright beams of light upon Thy Church, that it being enlightened by the doctrine of Thy blessed Apostle and Evangelist Saint John may so walk in the light of Thy truth, that it may at length attain to the light of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

CHAPTER I.

1 *The divinity, humanity, and office of Jesus Christ.* 15 *The testimony of John.* 39 *The calling of Andrew, Peter, &c.*

a Prov. 8. 22, 23, &c. Col. 1. 17. 1 John 1. 1. Rev. 1. 2. & 19. 13.
b Prov. 8. 30. ch. 17. 5. 1 John 1. 2.
c Phil. 2. 6. 1 John 5. 7.

IN the beginning [a] was the Word, and the Word was [b] with God, [c] and the Word was God.

CHAPTER I.

1—18. Of the nature and office of the Son of God.

1. **"In the beginning."** St. John's Gospel has been called the Genesis of the New Testament. It takes us back to the "beginning." Yet not alone to the same "beginning" as Moses speaks of, for the New Testament goes farther back than the Old. In Genesis the "beginning" is the beginning of creation. St. John's "beginning" is before all creation. It signifies the eternal existence of that which was without beginning—from everlasting.

"The Word." This title of Christ is used in other places by St. John (See 1 St. John i. 1. and Rev. xix. 13.). He found the expression employed by those who were spreading false teaching in the primitive Church (See *Note*), and at once cleared it in the few almost startling words of this first verse—"thunder by the son of thunder" (*Bengel*)—of the false notions which had gathered round it. It was a true title of Christ, though it had been falsely used. As St. Paul declared to the Athenians the "Unknown God", whom they ignorantly worshipped, so St. John declares to the Church that Divine Word, whom many ignorantly or perversely misunderstood. The title is a most fitting one; for Christ came to declare—to reveal, or make known—God to man (18.), even as a word, which can be heard or read, makes known the thought, which none can hear or see. Christ is *the expression of the mind of God.* "All things", He says, "that I have "heard of My Father, I have made known unto you" (xv. 15.).

"The Word was with God." This declares the distinct personal existence of the Word. The Word was not a mere attribute of God, like Wisdom or Power or Goodness; nor a mere way of speaking of God's revelation of Himself, as though it were God in His providence, as manifesting Himself to His creatures; nor a mere power put forth for a special work, and so as it were a part of God. The Word is a distinct Person—"*with God*" from everlasting.

"The Word was God." Neither is the Word in any degree inferior to God. He is not a being sent forth, like some higher Angel, to do God's work. He is "the very and eternal God, and of one "substance with the Father" (Art. ii.). Thus at the very outset does St. John strike the key-note of all his Gospel—The Son of Man very and eternal God (See on v. 18.).

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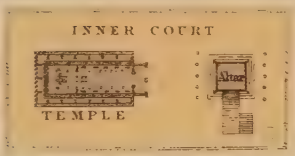
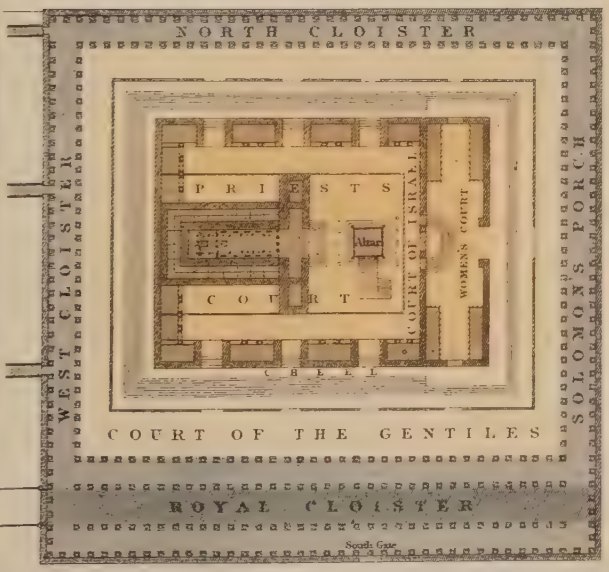
1. "*The Word.*" It appears that before the time of Christ the "Word" and the "Wisdom" of God had come to be used by the Jews in more or less of a *personal* sense. Indeed many passages in the Old Testament might be supposed to favour such an idea (See, for example, Ps. xxxiii. 6. Prov. viii. 22—26.), while in the Apocryphal Books, which were written nearer to the time of Christ than

THE TEMPLE OF SOLOMON





THE TEMPLE OF HEROD

Stanford's Geograph.l Estab.t London

2 [d] The same was in the beginning with God.
3 [e] All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made.
4 [f] In Him was life; and [g] the life was the light of men.

[d] Gen. 1. 1.
[e] ver. 10. Ps. 33. 6. Eph. 3. 9. Col. 1. 16. Heb. 1. 2. Rev. 4. 11.
[f] ch. 5. 26. 1 John 5. 11.
[g] ch. 8. 12. & 9. 5. & 12. 35, 46.

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2. "The same was in the beginning with God." St. John here repeats, confirms, and enforces, in a shorter form, the mighty truths declared in the first verse. Before he enters upon the earthly work and earthly sufferings of the Redeemer he would fix firmly in our minds the truth of His eternal Godhead. So when we read of Jesus weary by Jacob's well, or weeping by the grave of Lazarus, or bound and tried and mocked and crucified, we should ever recollect—'This 'is He who was in the beginning with God, and who was God.' The early Christians often likened the eternal union of the Son with the Father to the union of light with the sun.

3. "All things were made by Him;" &c. We are too much accustomed to think of creation as belonging to God the Father alone. Here and elsewhere God the Son is most distinctly declared to be the Creator: and this not only because He is one with the Father, so that what the Father does, that the Son does also; but in some special sense, in which the Creation, as well as the government, of this world is spoken of as being committed by the Father to the Son. Thus St. Paul, speaking of Christ, says, "By Him were all things created, that "are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether "they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things "were created by Him and for Him: and He is before all things, "and by Him all things consist" (Col. i. 16, 17.). And again, God is said to have "spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed "Heir of all things, *by whom also He made the worlds*" (Hebr. i. 2.).

The Evangelist is still exalting the eternal Word, before he follows Him down to this lower earth. For He that created all things cannot Himself have been created, and must be God;—not an inferior being (as the Gnostic false teachers held) employed, as it were, by God in the affairs of this world, but Himself "equal to the Father as touching "His Godhead." All spiritual beings and powers, however high, being made by Him, He cannot be one of these, but must be far above all.

4. "In Him was life." In Christ—as the eternal Word, God from everlasting. St. John is not yet thinking of the Word *Incarnate*, visiting this world in the flesh. Life was an eternal property of the

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any part of the Old Testament, there are passages speaking of Wisdom still more as if it were a living power distinct from God (See, for example, Wisd. vi. 22. vii. 22—30. ix. 1, 4, 9. viii. 15, 16. Ecclus. i. 1, 4. xxiv. 9, 19—22.). Had such language been simply interpreted of the promised Messiah, no great error would have arisen. But the Jews settled in the Egyptian city Alexandria began to engraft upon this language vain notions taken from the heathen philosophy, with which they had become familiar. They gradually learnt to regard the Supreme God as a Being far removed from all care for, or interest in, this world, and both creating and governing it by inferior powers or beings sent forth by Him, of whom they held the "Word" or the "Wisdom" of God to be one. This was the origin of that Gnostic heresy (See on Title of this Gospel), which so greatly disturbed the early Church, and against which so much of St. John's writings is evidently aimed.

h ch. 3. 19.

5 And h the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

i ver. 33. Mal. 3. 1. Matt. 3. 1. Luke 3. 2.

6 i There was a man sent from God, whose name *was* John.

k Acts 19. 4.

7 k The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all *men* through him might believe.

Word; who had life in Himself, and poured it forth upon His creation, both natural and spiritual, as from an exhaustless fountain. He Himself declares that "as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He "given to the Son to have life in Himself", so that "the dead shall "hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live" (v. 25, 26.). And again He speaks of Himself in His great Prayer as having "power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life" (xvii. 2.).

"The life was the light of men." That is, the Life which flowed from the Son of God was the cause of that inward spiritual Light in man whereby he is saved. When *Light* shines in our souls, teaching us the things of God, it is a sign that we have in our souls also the divine *Life*. For if our souls did not live through the *life* which Christ gives, they could not behold the *light* which Christ gives. The Evangelist, like an Eagle (See Introduction), has soared up to the highest heaven: he is now bending his flight downwards to this world and to man.

5. "The light shineth in darkness;" &c. There is here a gradual change in the meaning of the Light. In the last verse it was the sunbeam springing *from* Christ: here it is Christ Himself, the Sun. He is Himself "the true Light" (9.), because He is the fountain of light. "Darkness" signifies the state of the world when Christ came. It was a state of sin, ignorance, and unbelief, which would not accept and embrace the Light. So at the Creation, when God said "Let "there be light", that light broke upon a world that was "without "form, and void" and wrapped in thickest darkness. But, while the natural darkness yielded to the light of creation, the spiritual darkness resisted and rejected the "true Light."

6. "A man sent from God." How differently does the Evangelist speak of the coming of him who was only "a man", and of the coming of the Word who "was God." So too in the prophecy of the sending of St. John the Baptist (Mal. iii. 1.), the strongest contrast is seen between the earthly messenger who was to prepare the way, and the "Messenger of the covenant", who was "the Lord". And yet there are some who teach that Christ was no more than "a man sent from God"!

How well does the divinely given name "John"—which means "The Lord is gracious" (See on St. Luke i. 13.)—accord with the gracious tidings which the Forerunner was sent to proclaim!

7. "For a witness." As the ray of morning light witnesses to the rising sun.

"That all men through him" &c. "Through him" is to be understood of St. John the Baptist, not of the Light. "All men" must be limited to those who heard his witness. He came that all who heard him might believe on that true Light to which he bore witness.

8 He was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that Light.

9 [1] *That* was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

10 He was in the world, and [m] the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not.

11 [n] He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.

12 But [o] as many as received Him, to them gave He [2] power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on His name:

[1] ver. 4. Isai. 49. 6. 1 John 2. 8.
[m] ver. 3. Heb. 1. 2. & 11. 3.
[n] Luke 19. 14. Acts 3. 26. & 13. 46.
[o] Isai. 56. 5. Rom. 8. 15. Gal. 3. 26. 2 Pet. 1. 4. 1 John 3. 1.
[2] Or, *the right*, or, *privilege*.

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8. "Not that Light." And yet the "true Light" speaks of him as "a burning and a shining light" (v. 35.). So a single ray of light is bright when we cannot see the sun; but the ray is not the sun. It may be noted that when Jesus calls the Forerunner a "shining "light", the word used for "light" is not the same as that used in this place, which signifies the glorious light of day, but is literally a 'lamp'.

9. "The true Light." Christ calls Himself "the Light of the "world" (viii. 12. ix. 5. and compare xii. 46.).

"Which lighteth every man." Being Himself the Fountain of all spiritual light. No man has light in himself, however proud he may be of his natural powers; for all true light comes from Christ. He, by His Spirit, who is the "Spirit of truth", and by His written word, which is the voice of truth, leads men into all truth.

10. "He was in the world." That is, when He was "made flesh "and dwelt among us" (14.). The Creator came into the midst of His creation, and it knew Him not! Wise in its own eyes, yet "the "world by wisdom knew not God" (1 Cor. i. 21.), and when He came to save it, rejected Him! The Evangelist's words are uttered in sorrowful astonishment.

11. "His own." In the Greek there is a difference between the first and the second of the words thus translated. The first time the meaning is 'His own possession or inheritance'; the second time it is 'His own people.' It was not merely to the world which He had made that the Son of God came. He came to the land of His inheritance,—to the nation which He had chosen,—to those called to be "a special people unto Himself, above all people that are upon the "face of the earth" (Deut. vii. 6.); and even *they*, with much light and knowledge granted them, "received Him not."

12. "As many as received Him." So that not all rejected Him. Both out of the "world" (10.), and out of "His own" (11.), there was a remnant who "received Him." Both from Jews and Gentiles there was an election who became the new chosen people, the new Israel, the Church of the living God. These "received" Christ by "believing "on His Name"; and to this their first faith—itself the gift of God—was granted the priceless privilege here spoken of, namely the "power "to become the sons of God." It is remarkable that St. John does not say that the Lord made these believers sons of God, but that He gave them "power to become" so; teaching us that our Faith has

13 [p] which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

14 [q] And the Word [r] was made [s] flesh, and dwelt among us, (and [t] we beheld His glory, the glory

[p] ch. 3. 5. James 1. 18. 1 Pet. 1. 23. [q] Matt. 1. 16, 20. Luke 1. 31, 35 & 2. 7. 1 Tim. 3. 16. [r] Rom. 1. 3. Gal. 4. 4. [s] Heb. 2. 11, 14, 16, 17. ch. 2. 11. & 11. 40. 2 Pet. 1. 17. [t] Isai. 40. 5. Matt. 17. 2.

a choice to make and a work to do. To "become sons of God" they that received Christ would both inwardly by faith give themselves to God as His children, and outwardly seal their choice and covenant in the Sacrament of holy Baptism. It is very instructive to see how another Apostle joins Faith and Baptism together in speaking of our entrance into the state of God's children: "Ye are all the children "of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been "baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Gal. iii. 26, 27.). Blessed privilege! "Beloved, now are we the sons of God" (1 St. John iii. 2.). May He who gave the power to become so give also the power to continue so to the end!

13. "Which were born." Of this new birth we shall hear more in the conversation with Nicodemus (iii. 3—8.). Meanwhile we may note—1. That to become children is to be born: so that to become children or sons of God is to be born of God—to be born into God's family. 2. That this is no natural or ordinary birth, like our birth in the flesh, but a spiritual and new birth, wrought by God through the power of the Holy Ghost. Of this new birth Baptism is the ordinary sign, pledge, and instrument.

14. "The Word was made flesh." This is the most distinct statement of the great "mystery of" the "holy Incarnation"—that is, of the coming of God in the flesh. By "flesh" here is meant the *whole* of human nature; "perfect Man, of a reasonable soul and human flesh "subsisting." The Word was made flesh, not by being changed into Man, nor by ceasing to be God, but by taking to Himself Man's nature. For, as the Athanasian Creed most clearly teaches, "Although He "be God and Man; yet He is not two, but one Christ, One, not by "conversion of the Godhead into flesh; but by taking of the Manhood "into God." The necessity for Christ being perfect God and perfect Man is well stated in a few words by St. Leo the Great, who writes, "Unless He were very God, He would not bring us healing; unless "He were very Man, He would not supply an example."

"Dwelt among us." This is literally, 'tabernacled—or pitched 'His tent—in us', that is, in our nature—a closer and more intimate union than is expressed by our English version "among us." The image is taken from an Eastern traveller taking up his abode for a short time in some place as he passes by. St. Paul in like manner speaks of the body as the "tabernacle" of the soul (2 Cor. v. 1—4.).

"We beheld His glory." The word 'tabernacle' seems to suggest to St. John the remembrance of the Shechinah, or visible glory of the Lord, which was seen upon the mercy-seat in the tabernacle which Moses made in the wilderness (See Lev. xvi. 2.). As the Jews of

14. "*Made flesh.*" One sect of the Gnostics taught that our Lord had no real human flesh, but was a mere phantom or appearance, and so did not really suffer and die.

as of the only begotten of the Father,) [u] full of grace and truth.

15 [x] John bare witness of Him, and cried, saying, This was He of whom I spake, [y] He that cometh after me is preferred before me: [z] for He was before me.

16 And of His [a] fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.

[u] Col. 1. 19. & 2. 3, 9.
[x] ver. 32. ch. 3. 32. & 5. 33.
[y] ver. 27, 30. Matt. 3. 11. Mark 1. 7. Luke 3. 16. ch. 3. 31.
[z] ch. 8 58. Col. 1. 17.
[a] ch. 3. 34. Eph. 1. 6, 7, 8. Col. 1. 19. & 2. 9, 10.

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old beheld God's glory in their Tabernacle, so did the Apostles behold the glory of the eternal Son of God shining in the tabernacle of His human Flesh. This was true in greater or less degree all through His earthly life, in which He continually "manifested forth His "glory" (ii. 11.) to such as had eyes to see. Surely for us too the same glory may shine forth from the written record of the Saviour's earthly sojourn, if we are enlightened by the Spirit to behold His glory. But perhaps St. John is thinking more especially of the glorious vision of the Transfiguration, when he "beheld His glory" more literally (See 2 St. Pet. i. 17.).

"Only begotten." An expression only used by St. John. It signifies that God had but one Son in the highest and truest sense. We must be careful not to understand "begotten" as though it were 'made' or 'created'. It is a human word very imperfectly setting forth the Divine relationship. All we can say is that the Son of God is "begotten "from everlasting of the Father" (Art. ii.). The word expresses, not an act of creating, but an eternal relationship.

"Full of grace and truth." This is said of the "Word", not of the "Father". "Grace" here signifies the free mercy and love of God towards His creatures. "Truth" is that which the Word came to reveal and make known to man.

15. "John bare witness" &c. The Evangelist appeals to the witness of the Baptist to confirm his words. The expression "preferred "before me" means 'set above me'. But the important words in the verse are the *reason* the Baptist gives for this exaltation of Christ—"for He *was before* me." In the flesh Jesus was not before John, being six months younger. Therefore the words declare His pre-existence. He was before John, because He was "in the beginning"—from everlasting.

16. "Of His fulness" &c. It is the Evangelist who is now again speaking. The Baptist's words end with the last verse. Christ is "full "of grace and truth". Of this fulness, as from a treasure-house, He bestows His gifts upon His people.

"Grace for grace." One grace, or one amount of grace, succeeding to, and taking place of, another. So the grace of virtue is added to faith, and of knowledge to virtue (2 St. Pet. i. 5.). So the grace of experience succeeds to patience, and of hope to experience (Rom. v. 4.). So to the grace which is sufficient for the child follows that which is needed by the youth, and to this that which is sufficient for the man. So upon the grace of penitence is received the grace of pardon, and upon that of pardon peace, and upon peace holiness, and upon

b Ex. 20. 1, &c. Deut. 4. 44. & 5. 1. & 33. 4.
c Rom. 3. 24. & 5. 21. & 6. 14.
d ch. 8. 32. & 14. 6.

17 For [b] the law was given by Moses, *but* [c] grace and [d] truth came by Jesus Christ.

18 [c] No man hath seen God at any time; [f] the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared *Him*.

A. D. 27. 31st Year of our Lord's life.
e Ex. 33. 20. Deut. 4. 12. Mat. 11. 27. Luke 10. 22. ch. 6. 46. 1 Tim. 1. 17. & 6. 16. 1 John 4. 12, 20.
f ver. 14. ch. 3. 16, 18. 1 John 4. 9.
g ch. 5. 33.
h Luke 3. 15. ch. 3. 28. Acts 13. 25.
i Mal. 4. 5. Matt. 17. 10.
k Deut. 18. 15, 18.
2 Or, *a prophet?*

19 ¶ And this is [g] the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou?

20 And [h] he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ.

21 And they asked him, What then? Art thou [i] Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou [k 2] that prophet? And he answered, No.

22 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself?

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holiness perseverance, and upon perseverance salvation. The fountain of grace is exhaustless. Blessed are they that drink thereof.

17. "For the law" &c. St. John contrasts the Law, in its sternness and its shadow, with the Gospel, in its richness of grace and revelation of the truth. No doubt the Law had in it some degree both of grace and of truth, but the fulness of these came with Christ.

18. "No man hath seen" &c. This verse seems to be a comment upon the word "truth." Christ has "declared"—that is, revealed, made clear to man—that which can be seen and known of the Father, whom "no man hath seen." By speaking of the Son as "in the "Bosom of the Father" St. John would declare the intimate knowledge which the Son has of the Father's thought and character. He comes to us declaring the Father's will, and that will is laid open to Him in the closeness of His unity with the Father.

19—37. The testimony of St. John the Baptist.

19. "The Jews." That is, as commonly in St. John's Gospel, their rulers, probably the Sanhedrin, or great council of the nation (See on St. Matt. xxvi. 3.). There was a wide-spread notion among the people that St. John the Baptist was himself the Messiah (See St. Luke iii. 15.).

21. "Art thou Elias?" This question was plainly asked in a literal sense, and therefore the Baptist answers, "I am not." Doubtless his appearance would lead to the enquiry (See on St. Matt. iii. 4.). That he *was* the Messenger prophesied of under the name of Elias our Lord expressly says (See on St. Matt. xi. 14. and St. Luke i. 17.).

"That prophet." That is, the prophet of whom Moses spoke (Deut. xviii. 15, 18.), who would be raised up like unto himself. It seems the Jews did not understand this prophecy as speaking of the Messiah, or were doubtful whether it referred to the Messiah or not (See on St. Matt. xvi. 14.).

23 [l]He said, I *am* **the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord,** as said the prophet Esaias. Isai. xl. 3.

A.D. 27.

[l] Matt. 3. 3. Mark 1. 3. Luke 3. 4. ch. 3. 28.

24 And they which were sent were of the Pharisees.

25 And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?

26 John answered them, saying, [m]I baptize with water: [n]but there standeth One among you, whom ye know not;

[m] Matt. 3. 11. [n] Mal. 3. 1.

27 [o]He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose.

[o] ver. 15, 30. Acts 19. 4.

28 These things were done [p]in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.

[p] Judg. 7. 24. ch. 10. 40.

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25. **"Why baptizest thou" &c.** The Jews were familiar with baptism as a sign of admission into a new faith. They themselves baptized proselytes (See on iii. 5. and for "proselyte" see on St. Matt. xxiii. 15.). They were therefore prepared, as their question shows, to find Christ, or Elias, or "that prophet" baptizing. What offended them was that one whom they did not know, and whose claims they did not allow, should take upon himself to gather disciples around him, and baptize them.

26. **"There standeth One" &c.** Plainly what is here related took place after our Lord's Baptism and Temptation in the wilderness to the former of which the Baptist refers in 32 and 33. At the end of the forty days our Lord seems to have returned for a short time to the place where John was baptizing, before going into Galilee. The Baptist's words do not at first sight appear to answer the question of the Pharisees. But they may be understood thus: 'You ask me 'why I baptize. It is not in my own name, or for my own glory, 'or to gather disciples to myself. I baptize with water, it is true. But 'I point you to Another greater than I am. I am nothing. I claim 'no power, no greatness. I am but the Forerunner, sent to prepare 'the way of the Lord.' Of course, though the Baptist does not here say so in words, he implies that He who stood among them would baptize with a better baptism than that of water, as indeed he plainly declared at other times in his teaching (See St. Matt. iii. 11.).

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24. "*Pharisees.*" See on St. Matt. iii 7. The Pharisees at this time were the most powerful party among the Jews. Perhaps St. John mentions the Pharisees, because this would account for the enquiries made and objections raised; the Pharisees, who were strict observers of the Law, being naturally offended at one like John the Baptist taking upon himself to preach and baptize.

26. "*I baptize with water.*" See on St. Matt. iii. 6.

28 "*Bethabara.*" All the oldest copies of this Gospel have "Bethany" instead of "Bethabara" here. Of course, if Bethany was the true reading, it does not refer to the Bethany on the Mount of Olives, but to another village of the same name, not now known, on the East bank of the Jordan.

A.D. 27.

29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold [q] the Lamb of God, [r] which [2] taketh away the sin of the world.

30 [s] This is He of whom I said, After me cometh a Man which is preferred before me: for He was before me.

31 And I knew Him not: but that He should be made manifest to Israel, [t] therefore am I come baptizing with water.

32 [u] And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and It abode upon Him.

33 And I knew Him not: but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, [x] the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.

[q] ver. 36. Exod. 12. 3. Isai. 53. 7. Acts 8. 32. 1 Pet. 1. 19. Rev. 5. 6, &c.
[r] Isai. 53. 11. 1 Cor. 15. 3. Gal. 1. 4. Heb. 1. 3. & 2. 17. & 9. 28. 1 Pet. 2. 24. & 3. 18. 1 John 2. 2. & 3. 5. & 4. 10. Rev. 1. 5.
[2] Or, *beareth.*
[s] ver. 15, 27.
[t] Mal. 3. 1. Matt. 3. 6. Luke 1. 17, 76, 77. & 3. 3, 4.
[u] Matt. 3. 16. Mark 1. 10. Luke 3. 22. ch. 5. 32.
[x] Matt. 3. 11. Acts 1. 5. & 2. 4. & 10. 44. & 19. 6.

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29. "**The next day.**" After the questioning by the Pharisees.

"**Behold the Lamb of God,**" &c. These are wonderful words, and could only be spoken by one inspired by the Holy Ghost. They plainly foretell the Sacrifice of Christ, and teach the great doctrine of the Atonement. We can hardly doubt that John the Baptist had in his mind the words of the great prophet, (who prophesied of the Baptist himself as the "Voice crying in the wilderness," and) who spoke of the Messiah thus: "He is brought as a Lamb to the slaughter". "Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows". "The "Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (Is. liii. 4, 6, 7.). Nor need we hesitate to believe that when God opened the Baptist's eyes to know the Messiah (33.), He taught him to see in Him the fulfilment of types and prophecies,—the Lamb of whom every sacrifice was a shadow, and of whom Isaiah spoke so marvellously. (Compare Rev. xiii. 8.). By "taketh away" is meant 'taketh upon Himself so 'as to remove from us.'

31. "**I knew Him not.**" This is to be understood of that perfect certainty, with which after receiving the sign he preached Christ as the Messiah. Before our Lord's Baptism the Baptist had doubtless known Him as his own Kinsman, and had probably recognized Him as One greater and holier than himself. But till that day he had not known Him as the "Lamb of God" (See farther on 33. and on St. Matt. iii. 14.).

"**That He should be made manifest.**" The Baptist always speaks of himself most humbly, as only preparing the way for One greater. He baptized in order to lead men to Christ, and to prepare them for His public appearance and ministry.

33. "**He that sent me**" &c. God had sent him, and God made known to him (in what way we are not told) that the visible descent of the Holy Ghost would be to him the sign and proof of the Messiah.

34 And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God. A.D. 27.

35 Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples;

36 and looking upon Jesus as He walked, he saith, [y] Behold the Lamb of God! [y] ver. 29.

37 And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.

38 ¶ Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto Him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where [2] dwellest Thou? [2] Or, *abidest.*

But how then could St. John forbid our Lord, when He came to be baptized, saying, "I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest "Thou to me?" (St. Matt. iii. 14.) This was *before* the sign was given, and yet St. John seems to know Him. Possibly, even as the Lord approached, the Spirit within him made him conscious that the expected One was come, and prepared him for the sign which was shortly to follow. But at least the Baptist might see in our Lord One so holy as to lead him to shrink from baptizing Him, without having that assurance that He was the Messiah which he received in the visible descent of the Holy Ghost.

34. **"The Son of God."** Which the Father's own voice had proclaimed Him to be.

35. **"The next day after."** That is, after the Baptist had first pointed out Jesus as the Lamb of God. This, as we have seen (See on 26.), was immediately upon our Lord's return from His Temptation.

"Two of his disciples." One of these was St. Andrew (40.). It is generally thought that the other was the Evangelist St. John himself, who always shrinks from naming himself.

37. **"Followed Jesus."** Not yet as His disciples, but simply (as we see from the next verse) in a literal sense, wishing to make further acquaintance with One pointed out to them as the Lamb of God.

In these two the "Voice crying in the wilderness" had prepared the way of the Lord. The Baptist led them to the Lamb of God. They had been baptized with the baptism of repentance: they were going to be baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire. So it often is. "Elias must first come." The stern preacher of repentance is he who leads the sinner to Christ.

38—42. The first disciples of Christ.

38. **"What seek ye?"** This is said in kindness, to encourage the two to speak freely to Him.

"Where dwellest Thou?" They wished doubtless to seek Him in His home that they might learn from His own Sacred Lips truths which their former master had but dimly hinted at.

A.D 27. 39 He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where He dwelt, and abode with
2 *That was two hours before night.* Him that day: for it was [2] about the tenth hour.
40 One of the two which heard John *speak*, and
z Matt. 4. 18. followed Him, was [z] Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.
41 He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which
3 Or, *the Anointed.* is, being interpreted, [3] the Christ.
42 And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, He said, Thou art Simon the son of
a Matt. 16. 18. Jona: [a] thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by
4 Or, *Peter.* interpretation, [4] A stone.

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39. "Abode with Him that day." That is, for the rest of that day, from the 10th hour, which would be 4 o'clock by our reckoning (See Note on iv. 6.). How blessed to these two must those hours have been!

40. "One of the two." And we may well suppose that the other was St. John the Evangelist himself. The words are those of one very familiar with what he relates.

41. "He first findeth" &c. "The proof of our having really *found* "*Christ* is seen in our finding our brother and bringing him to Christ. "We find Christ by caring for the souls of our brethren" (*Bede quoted by Wordsworth.*). "He *first*—That is, Andrew found his brother "Simon before John was able to find his brother James: but be sure "the Disciple of Love was not much later in bringing his brother to "Christ. How genuine was the zeal of these men towards God, which "would not let either rest till he had conveyed the good tidings to his "brother!" (*Burgon.*)

42. "When Jesus beheld him." This is not merely 'when Jesus 'saw him.' It signifies a stedfast look, such as is frequently recorded of our Lord (See on St. Matt. xix. 26.). We may well suppose that look would be so searching and piercing as to make the person looked upon feel that his secret heart was known to that Eye.

"Thou art Simon" &c. Probably these words imply that Jesus knew him miraculously, as in the case of Nathanael afterwards (47, 48.), but possibly they are only spoken to contrast the old name with the new, which is now first given. "Cephas" is the Jewish word, as "Peter" is the Greek, for 'rock' or 'stone'; and the name is given prophetically, partly in respect of Peter's character as bold and deter-

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42. "*A stone.*" "Or Peter," as in the margin. It is said above that "Peter" signifies 'Rock or Stone.' The truth is that in the Greek there is a difference between the two words, signifying 'Rock' 'and Stone,' the former being 'Petra,' and the latter 'Petros,' this latter being the name 'Peter.' As arguments have been drawn from this difference, it is well to say that these have no weight, since the word 'Petra,' being feminine, could not be made the name of a man. But this is scarcely worth notice, when we recollect that our Lord probably spoke in the language of the country, and would use "Cephas", which means a Rock, and not 'Petros', the Greek word, which is more generally used for a 'stone.' The Jewish language of our Lord's time was not the pure original Hebrew, which ceased to be spoken from the time of the captivity, but Syro-Chaldaic, a mixed language, partly derived from the land in which a whole generation of Israelites grew up—the land of their captivity.

43 ¶ The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, [b] Follow Me. A. D. 27.

44 Now [b] Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.

45 Philip findeth [c] Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found Him, of whom [d] Moses in the law, and the [e] prophets, did write, Jesus [f] of Nazareth, the Son of Joseph.

[b] ch. 12. 21.
[c] ch. 21. 2.
[d] Gen. 3. 15. & 49. 10. Deu. 18. 18. See on Luke 24. 27.
[e] Isai. 4. 2. & 7. 14. & 9. 6. & 53. 2. Mic. 5. 2. Zech. 6. 12. & 9. 9.
See more on Luke 24. 27. [f] Matt. 2. 23. Luke 2. 4.

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mined, and partly in respect of his being a foundation-stone of the Church of Christ (See on St. Matt. xvi. 18.).

43—51. Philip and Nathanael.

43. "Jesus would go forth" &c. This is the return of Jesus to the country in which He had hitherto dwelt, after the great events of His Baptism, Temptation, and second visit to the place where John was baptizing, and where He gathered the first little company of disciples, who had themselves probably travelled from Galilee to Judæa, for the purpose of hearing the Baptist.

"Findeth Philip," &c. This is the first call actually made by our Lord Himself. We must observe that Christ is not yet choosing His Apostles. He is only gathering disciples. From these He afterwards chose the Twelve (See St. Luke vi. 13.). Blessed they who follow whenever the Lord calls. The simple unquestioning obedience of these poor unlearned men ended in their being princes in the kingdom of heaven.

44. "Bethsaida." A village on the West shore of the Sea of Galilee, a little South of Capernaum (See on St. Luke ix. 10.).

45. "Philip findeth Nathanael." Nathanael is generally allowed to be the same as Bartholomew (See on St. Matt. x. 3.). At first sight it appears as though this finding of Nathanael took place immediately upon the call of Philip, and before our Lord started on His journey Northwards to Galilee. But Alford suggests, with some reason, that, as Nathanael belonged to Cana of Galilee (See xxi. 2.), and as our Lord seems to have gone there at once on His return to Galilee (ii. 1.), it may have been in his home in Cana that Philip found him.

"Moses in the law." Probably Philip had in his mind the prophecy of Moses that God would raise up a Prophet like unto himself, a prophecy which he had learnt rightly to apply to the Messiah (See on 21.). Still of course this is not the only place in the Books of Moses in which the coming of Christ is foretold.

"The Son of Joseph." For so He was commonly thought to be, and Philip did not as yet know better. It seems probable that Philip, living in a neighbouring village to Nazareth, knew our Lord before this time, if not personally, at least by name; and our Lord's question,

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43. "*Into Galilee.*" This visit to Galilee (ending with ii. 12.) was a very early one, taking place between our Lord's Baptism and His first Passover, and both this and probably also that related in chapter iv. were earlier than the first visit to Galilee related by the other Evangelists, who omit the first portion of our Lord's ministry (See *Note* on iv. 1. and *Note* on St. Matt. iv. 12.).

A.D. 27.

46 And Nathanael said unto him, [g] Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.

[g] ch. 7. 41, 42, 52.

47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, and saith of him, Behold [h] an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!

[h] Ps. 32. 2. & 73. 1. ch. 8. 39. Rom. 2. 28, 29. & 9. 6.

48 Nathanael saith unto Him, Whence knowest Thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee.

49 Nathanael answered and saith unto Him,

"Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, "Philip?" (xiv. 9.) would have the greater force, if Philip had known our Lord before.

46. "Can there any good thing" &c. This is asked in wonder that so great an honour could belong to so small and poor and unknown a place as Nazareth. But God's ways are not as our ways.

"Come and see." "Manifestly an echo of Christ's 'Come and see' "of the day preceding" (*Trench.*). Philip cares not to answer Nathanael's objection, being sure that, if he can once bring his friend into the presence of Christ, his guileless mind will be fully satisfied, and all doubts will vanish away.

47. "Behold an Israelite indeed," &c. This was the first meeting between Jesus and Nathanael; and our Lord shows Himself One who "needed not that any should testify of man: for He knew what was "in man" (ii. 25.). He read Nathanael's heart and character. By an "Israelite indeed" He means one living up to the true spiritual calling and privileges of the chosen people—one not merely of the seed of Abraham after the flesh, but a child of Abraham by his faith,—one belonging to the true "Israel of God" (Gal. vi. 16.). The chief feature in Nathanael's character was *guilelessness*. He was truthful, open, candid, and free from deceit and hypocrisy. This made him ready to receive the truth freely. Possibly our Lord had in His mind the Psalmist's words, "Blessed is the man . . . in whose spirit there is no "guile" (Ps. xxxii. 2.).

48. "Whence knowest Thou me?" We should not understand this question as meaning 'How is it Thou canst read my character so truly?' as though Nathanael thought he deserved the high praise pronounced upon him. It is rather 'How is it Thou knowest any thing about 'a stranger such as I am, so as to speak as if Thou couldest read the 'heart?' Probably Nathanael thought Philip had been praising him, with a friend's too favourable language, to our Lord. Jesus however at once shows him that He needed no such help of man, for He reveals to him what he had been doing before Philip found him, as though to say, 'If I could see thee then, though out of sight, can I not see thy 'heart now?' It is probable that Nathanael had been doing something more than the mere words of our Lord declare. He may have been engaged in prayer, or studying the prophecies concerning our Lord, or occupied in some other way, which Jesus showed that He knew.

"I saw thee." Plainly not with natural sight, but by Divine power.

Rabbi, [i]Thou art the Son of God; Thou art [k]the King of Israel. A.D. 27.

[i] Mat. 14. 33.
[k] Mat. 21. 5. & 27. 11, 42. ch. 18. 37. & 19. 3.

50 Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these.

51 And He saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, [l]Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.

[l] Gen. 28. 12. Matt. 4. 11. Luke 2. 9. 13. & 22. 43. & 24. 4. Acts 1. 10.

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49. "Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God;" &c. By both the titles here given Nathanael confesses his belief that Jesus is the Messiah. David represents God as calling Christ "My King" and "My Son" (Ps. ii. 6, 7.). Nathanael was convinced by our Lord's miraculous knowledge that His claim to be the Messiah was true. So the Woman of Samaria was convinced (iv. 29.). We may compare this confession of Nathanael with that of St. Peter, and the blessing pronounced upon it by our Lord (St. Matt. xvi. 16—19.). In neither case had "flesh and "blood" revealed it, but God Himself; and to Nathanael, as well as to the more eminent Apostle, it was granted to be one of the foundation-stones of the Church.

51. "Verily, verily, I say." This repetition of the "Verily" is only given in St. John's Gospel. Mark the tone of solemn authority conveyed in such an expression. Jesus speaks "as One having authority" (St. Matt. vii. 29.). The original word for "Verily" is "Amen", and the meaning is 'Truly' or 'Assuredly.'

"Hereafter ye shall see" Literally, 'Henceforth ye shall see.' Though spoken to Nathanael, this promise is in the plural, "*Ye* shall see,' as embracing many besides himself. The meaning is, "From this time "forth ye shall see such wonderful acts of grace and power as will "prove that heaven, once closed by the sin of Adam, is now again "thrown open by Me. Ye shall see the true fulfilment of that which "Jacob saw in his dream, when he beheld "a ladder set up on the "earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the Angels of "God ascending and descending on it." The constant communication "between heaven and earth, which Jacob's ladder prefigured, has now "commenced: heavenly messengers are ever on the wing between them, "ascending with the prayers of faithful people, and descending with a "never-failing store of grace and blessing. My presence makes, as it "were, a heaven upon earth, wherein angels are continually ministering "to Me and Mine" (*Peter Young's Daily Readings.*). The descent of Angels "upon the Son of Man" was *literally* manifest at His Agony and Resurrection; but perhaps the promise will be most literally fulfilled when the Son of God comes again, and "all the holy Angels with Him" (St. Matt. xxv. 31.). "No doubt it is very hard amid the distractions "of the world to believe the unseen glories of our Christian state: but "let a man strive in earnest to be like Nathanael, a Christian not in "word only, but in reality; and his eyes will gradually open to see the "glories in the midst of which he lives: the mists of earth will fade "away, and he will come to perceive, like Jacob of old, that he is "standing on the very threshold, as it were, of heaven, with light and "glory streaming all around" (*Peter Young,*).

A.D. 27.

CHAPTER II.

1 Christ turneth water into wine, 12 departeth into Capernaum, and to Jerusalem, 14 where He purgeth the temple of buyers and sellers. 19 He foretelleth His death and resurrection. 23 Many believed because of His miracles, but He would not trust Himself with them.

[a] See Josh. 19. 28.

AND the third day there was a marriage in [a] Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there:

2 and both Jesus was called, and His disciples, to the marriage.

3 And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto Him, They have no wine.

CHAPTER II.

1—11. The Marriage at Cana.

1. **"The third day."** That is, after the events last related. According to the Jewish way of speaking the "third day" means the next day but one.

"Cana." A village not far from Capernaum, still called by the same name.

"The mother of Jesus was there." Plainly by what follows she was very familiar in the house, which was probably that of some near relative. Doubtless Joseph was dead before this time.

2. **"Jesus was called," &c.** This again shows an intimacy greater than mere acquaintance. It was plainly already known to this family that Jesus had within the last few days gathered around Him a little band of disciples, whom they made welcome with Him. Probably St. John was himself amongst these disciples.

By His presence at this marriage feast our Lord gives His sanction and blessing to innocent social enjoyments. He would teach us that the Christian's duty is not to condemn and avoid, but to hallow and purify, occasions of social intercourse. Let our rule be so to enter into society as that we should welcome Christ's presence with us, and so to act in society as we should act if He were present, and then we shall be safe.

We must also observe the high blessedness of Christian marriage, "which holy estate Christ adorned and beautified with His presence, "and first miracle that He wrought, in Cana of Galilee" (*Marriage Service.*). Blessed are they who seek in all the great events of life to have Christ for their guest!

3. **"They have no wine."** Plainly this remark was made with the hope of some miraculous supply of the want. Had the Lord already told His mother that the time was come when He should do mighty works and manifest forth His glory? It may have been so. Or she may have gathered this herself from the wonders attending His Baptism and Temptation, and His first public appearance as Leader of a band of disciples.

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1. "*Galilee.*" See *Note* on i. 43.

4 Jesus saith unto her, [b] Woman, [c] what have I to do with thee? [d] Mine hour is not yet come. A.D. 27.

5 His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever He saith unto you, do *it*.

6 And there were set there six waterpots of stone, [e] after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece.

7 Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim.

8 And He saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare *it*.

9 When the ruler of the feast had tasted [f] the water that was made wine, and knew not whence

[b] ch. 19. 26.
[c] So 2 Sam. 16. 10. & 19. 22.
[d] ch. 7. 6.
[e] Mark 7. 3.
[f] ch. 4. 46.

4. "**Woman, what have I to do with thee?**" "Woman" was a word of respectful address at that time, and is used by our Lord in speaking to His mother from the Cross (xix. 26.). Still the rest of the question implies some gentle blame, as though the blessed Virgin Mary had shown an impatient anxiety for the display of His miraculous power. It was time she should understand—and Jesus had probably told her—that henceforth He must stand forth as the Messiah, His Divine power and will no longer subject to human control. Therefore she should have waited patiently, knowing that He would act at the right moment and in the right way. It is as though He said, 'Thou forgettest that I must now act for Myself, and no more be guided by thee.'

"**Mine hour is not yet come.**" This probably means, 'The moment for the display of My power is not yet come.'

5. "**His mother saith**" &c. This shows that the rebuke in our Lord's last words was no very stern one. Doubtless He showed by His manner that, while He checked her impatience, He was yet about shortly to do the miracle. The Virgin Mary's words to the servants show her familiarity with the house (See on 1.).

6. "**Six waterpots of stone,**" &c. St. John, writing for Gentile readers, is careful to explain Jewish customs, and here shows that these waterpots were not placed where they were with any view to the miracle, but for the purposes of washing the hands and the vessels used in the feast, according to the traditions which the Jews so carefully observed (See St. Mark vii. 3, 4.). The "firkin" is a large measure containing $4\frac{1}{2}$ gallons (though some make it $8\frac{1}{2}$ gallons), so that the amount contained by the six jars was very large. Mark the freedom and bountifulness of Christ's gifts. They are more than we either desire or deserve. And observe how He, who but a little before refused to minister by a miracle to His own extreme need, is more than ready to minister to the wants of others. "He will do nothing at the suggestion of Satan: though all at the suggestion of love" (*Trench.*).

8. "**The governor of the feast.**" Probably some friend of the family, who was appointed, according to custom, to preside as chairman (to use a modern expression). It was his business to taste the wine put on the table, and to see to its being distributed to the guests. (The office is spoken of in the Apocryphal book Ecclus. xxxii. 1.)

A.D. 27. it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom,

10 and saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: *but* thou hast kept the good wine until now.

11 This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana
g ch. 1. 14. of Galilee, [g] and manifested forth His glory; and His disciples believed on Him.

12 ¶ After this He went down to Capernaum, He,
h Matt. 12. 46. and His mother, and [h] His brethren, and His disciples: and they continued there not many days.

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10. "Every man at the beginning" &c. The ruler of the feast is here stating what was the too common experience on like occasions. His words are spoken in pleasantry, and mean, 'Other men are accused 'of giving their best wine first, and, when men have drunk so much as 'to have blunted their taste, then bringing out inferior. You have done 'just the opposite,—namely kept your best to the last.' It is hardly worth saying that no excess in the slightest degree could possibly have occurred at this marriage feast, for our Lord would neither have contributed to any such sin by a miracle, nor have been present at all in that case. No doubt the large amount of wine created was not consumed on this occasion.

11. "This beginning of miracles." These words seem at once to shut out the reputed miracles of our Lord's Childhood related in the false gospels of the early ages. Bishop Hall writes upon these words.—"Could "there be a greater miracle than this, that, having been thirty years "upon earth, Thou didst no miracle till now?"

This miracle has a peculiar fitness as the "beginning" of our Lord's miracles, for it well sets forth, as a parable, the nature of His great work on earth. That work may be said to be "an ennobling of the common, "and transforming of the mean, a turning of the water of earth into the "wine of heaven" (*Trench.*). Whether for each separate Christian, or for His Church at large, Christ keeps His best gifts for the last. He has changed the weak and poor ordinances of the Law into the "new "wine" of the Gospel. He will change the lesser gifts and blessedness of His Kingdom here into the full and boundless delights of the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

"His glory." That, namely, which the Evangelist has already spoken of as "the glory as of the only begotten of the Father" (i. 14.). As in the multiplying of the loaves, so in the present miracle, Christ stands forth as the Creator dealing as He will with His creatures.

"His disciples believed on Him." "Again and again they believed, "*new degrees* of faith being attained" (*Alford.*).

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12 "*To Capernaum.*" See on St. Matt. iv. 13. We know nothing of this brief visit to Capernaum except what is here told us. It was earlier than the time spoken of by St. Matthew (See *Note* on i. 43).

"*His brethren.*" See *Note* on St. Matt. xiii. 55.

13 [i] And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem, A.D. 27.

14 [k] and found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting:

15 and when He had made a scourge of small cords, He drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables;

[i] ver. 23. Ex. 12. 14. Deut. 16. 1, 16. ch. 5. 1. & 6. 4. & 11. 55.

[k] Mark 11. 15. Luke 19. 45.

12—22. Visit to Jerusalem, and first Cleansing of the Temple.

Compare the second Cleansing of the Temple, St. Matt. xxi. 12—16.

13. "The Jews' passover." This was the first of the four Passovers of our Lord's public ministry, which lasted for a little more than three years, beginning and ending with a Passover. It is very remarkable that both at the beginning and at the ending of His public ministry our Lord should have performed the same act of authority. This first cleansing of the Temple is related by St. John alone; the second is related by the other three Evangelists. Can we doubt the weighty significance of an act thus twice solemnly performed? Surely it must be meant to teach us a most important lesson.

14. "In the temple." That is, doubtless, in the outer court—the "court of the Gentiles," where a market had been held for the convenience of the strangers coming up to Jerusalem for the feasts. Even this, the least sacred portion of the Temple, is in the Lord's eyes "holy "ground."

15. "A scourge" &c. Doubtless in order to drive the animals, rather than the buyers and sellers themselves, out of the sacred place. But perhaps we may regard this scourge rather as the *sign and symbol* of our Lord's righteous wrath than as an instrument actually used by Him in its execution. It is plain that the buyers and sellers yielded at once to His authority, probably struck with conviction at the appearance of power and majesty which He presented, as the soldiers sent to take Him were afterwards struck in the Garden of Gethsemane, when they "went "backward and fell to the ground" (xviii. 6.). Still our Lord's acts on this occasion were plainly acts of strong indignation and righteous violence. They are in truth a fulfilment of the great prophecy of Malachi,—"The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His "Temple: even the Messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in. "Behold, He shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts. But who may abide "the day of His coming? And who shall stand when He appeareth? "For He is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap; and He shall "sit as a Refiner and Purifier of silver" (Mal. iii. 1—3.). Jesus is generally presented to us in exceeding love and tenderness. Here we have a vision of the "wrath of the Lamb." By His act of vengeance He teaches the truth which His Apostle declares,—"If any man defile "the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is "holy, which temple ye are" (1 Cor. iii. 17.). That anger, resentment,

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16 and said unto them that sold doves, Take these
[1] Luke 2. 49. things hence; make not [1] My Father's house an house of merchandise.

17 And His disciples remembered that it was written, **The zeal of Thine house hath eaten me up.**
Ps. 69. 9.

18 Then answered the Jews and said unto Him,
[m] Mat. 12. 38. ch. 6. 30. [m] What sign shewest Thou unto us, seeing that Thou doest these things?
[n] Mat. 26. 61. & 27. 40. Mark 14. 58. & 15. 29. 19 Jesus answered and said unto them, [n] Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.

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and indignation, are not *in themselves* sinful is plain to a thoughtful mind. God has implanted no sentiment or feeling in human nature which has not its proper object and use. As one of the wisest of writers has said, "That passion, from whence men take occasion to run into "the dreadful vices of malice and revenge,—even that passion, as in-"planted in our nature by God, is not only innocent, but a generous "movement of mind. It is, in itself, and in its original, no more than "indignation against injury and wickedness" (*Bp. Butler.*). Anger is above all righteous when aroused by wrongs done to God. (See also on St. Mark iii. 5.)

16. "An house of merchandise." A graver charge is brought against the profaners of the Temple three years afterwards, when they had not only again established their market in the holy place, but had made that place a "den of thieves" by their dishonesty. "Surely *they* still make "God's House "a House of merchandize," who carry thither anxieties "about their secular concerns; and allow thoughts about trade—hopes "and fears about the market—to find place in the Sanctuary of God" (*Burgon.*). "The more men accustom themselves to honour the house "and ordinances of God, the more they will grow in inward holiness: "and the holier they are in themselves, the more will they reve-"rence the things and places which belong to God" (*Young's Daily Readings.*).

17. "The zeal of Thine house" &c. Our Lord's unwonted wrath called to the minds of the disciples these words of the Psalmist, which mean, 'Zeal for the purity and honour of Thy house hath taken possession of my whole soul, consuming me with a burning desire to cleanse it of all that defiles.'

18. "Answered." Not any thing our Lord had actually said, but the claim to authority implied in His acts.

"What sign" &c. The same question was asked of our Lord upon the second occasion of His performing the same act of authority (See St. Matt. xxi. 23.), but was met by our Lord in a different way.

19. "Destroy this temple," &c. Our Lord answers the Jews with a dark mysterious saying, which neither they, nor His disciples themselves, could understand at the time. The answer is in truth the same as that which our Lord gave on other occasions, when He said, "A "wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall "no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas" (St. Matt. xii. 39. xvi. 4.). The sign of Jonas would only be understood when our Lord

20 Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt Thou rear it up in three days? A.D. 27.

21 But He spake [o] of the temple of His body.

22 When therefore He was risen from the dead, [p] His disciples remembered that He had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.

[o] Col. 2. 9. Heb. 8. 2
[p] So 1 Cor. 3. 16. & 6. 19. 2 Cor. 6. 16. Luke 24. 8.

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rose from the dead: and the raising up of the temple in three days would also receive its explanation then. Our Lord spoke thus darkly because the Jews would not have received the truth, had He told it to them plainly. He uttered His prophecy with a view to its fulfilment, leaving it to be misunderstood and perverted until the time when its real meaning would be clear to those who had eyes to see. That our Lord performed miracles sufficient to convince all who were open to conviction is plain from what follows (23.). This saying of our Lord seems to have produced a great impression, for we find it brought against Him, though in a perverted form, at His trial (St. Matt. xxvi. 61.), and also mockingly brought against Him while He hung on the Cross (St. Matt. xxvii. 40.).

20. "Forty and six years" &c. The Jews were speaking of the Temple then before them, rebuilt and beautified by Herod the Great. Herod at least designed and began the work, but it had been going on for nearly thirty years since his death, and was at the time still unfinished.

21. "The temple of His Body." Because in it dwelt "all the "fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. ii. 9. See on i. 14.). St. Paul compares the body to a temple (1 Cor. vi. 19. 2 Cor. vi. 16. Eph. ii. 21, 22.). It is indeed but a tabernacle in which the spirit abides for a short season here on earth.

22. "They believed the scripture." That is, of course, the Old Testament Scriptures, no others being in existence. But what part of these Scriptures did they believe after the Resurrection, which they did not believe before? Plainly St. John is referring to those passages in which the Resurrection was prophesied, among which Psalm xvi. 10. (explained by St. Peter on the Day of Pentecost, Acts ii. 31.) would be a striking example. St. John does not mean that the disciples *dis*believed any of these prophecies before, but that they did not understand them, and that their fulfilment *confirmed their faith*. Observe how St. John writes of himself and St. Peter at the sepulchre. "As yet they "knew not the Scripture that He must rise again from the dead" (xx. 9.). Both our Lord's own words concerning the "temple of His Body", and the passages in the Scriptures speaking of the Resurrection, became plain to them after Christ was risen. Doubtless both He Himself would unfold them (See St. Luke xxiv. 27, 45.), and the Holy Ghost, given at Pentecost, would lead them to a right understanding of them (See xiv. 26. xvi. 13.). Our Lord frequently uttered things which could not be understood at the time (as for instance in the great discourse at Capernaum on the Bread of Life in Chapter vi.), but which would be unfolded in due time, and so display His prophetic power.

A.D. 27. 23 ¶ Now when He was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast *day*, many believed in His name, when they saw the miracles which He did.

q 1 Sam. 16. 7. 1 Chr. 28. 9. Matt. 9. 4. Mark 2. 8. ch. 6. 64. & 16. 30. Acts 1. 24. Rev. 2. 23.

24 But Jesus did not commit Himself unto them, because He knew all *men*,

25 and needed not that any should testify of man: for q He knew what was in man.

CHAPTER III.

1 *Christ teacheth Nicodemus the necessity of regeneration.* 14 *Of faith in His death.* 16 *The great love of God towards the world.* 18 *Condemnation for unbelief.* 23 *The baptism, witness, and doctrine of John concerning Christ.*

THERE was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:

23—25. Result of our Lord's visit to Jerusalem.

23. "Many believed." Yet not with all their hearts, as the next verse shews. They were convinced of Christ's divine power, as Simon the sorcerer was of Philip's (Acts viii. 13.), but were not prepared to submit their whole hearts to Him.

"The miracles." The multitude of our Lord's miracles is amazing. We are only told a very few of them as samples of the rest (*See the last verse of this Gospel.*).

24. "Did not commit Himself" &c. That is, 'did not *trust* Himself 'to them.' He did not open all His heart to them because they would not open all theirs to Him. They did not ask Him to depart like the Gadarenes (See on St. Luke viii. 37.), but they did not beseech Him to tarry with them like the Samaritans (iv. 40.). Some among them were passing into a more hopeful state like Nicodemus (See iii. 2.), but they were not yet capable of receiving what Christ had to give.

25. "Needed not" &c. See how he knew Nathanael's heart (i. 47.) and Peter's (St. Matt. xxvi. 34.). He that made the heart, shall he not know it? Verily "the Lord knoweth them that are His" (2 Tim. ii. 19.), and "He knoweth the secrets of the heart" (Ps. xliv. 21.).

CHAPTER III.

1—21. Our Lord's Conversation with Nicodemus.

1. "Nicodemus." Nicodemus is mentioned only by St. John. He was a Pharisee and a member of the Sanhedrin or great Council of the Jews (See on St. Matt. xxvi. 3.). Others of this Council besides Nicodemus believed secretly in Christ but had not courage to confess their belief (See xii. 42.). It seems (from 2.) that Nicodemus was one of those mentioned in the last chapter (ii. 23.) who believed from

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23. "*In the feast day.*" The word "*day*" is not in the original, as shown by its being printed in small type (See on St. John viii. 6.). It would have been better to omit it, since the feast lasted a week, and there is no reason to limit what is related to one day.

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2 [a]the same came to Jesus by night, and said unto Him, Rabbi, we know that Thou art a teacher come from God: for [b]no man can do these miracles that Thou doest, except [c]God be with him.

3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, [d]Except *a man* be born [2]again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

[a] ch. 7. 50. & 19. 39.
[b] ch. 9. 16. 33. Acts 2. 22.
[c] Acts 10. 38.
[d] ch. 1. 13. Gal. 6. 15. Titus 3. 5. James 1. 18. 1 Pet. 1. 23. 1 John 3. 9.
2 Or, *from above.*

seeing our Lord's miracles. It is very interesting to mark the gradual growth of faith and of courage in this disciple. Here he comes to Jesus by night through fear. Some time afterwards he is bold enough to speak in our Lord's behalf before the "Chief Priests and Pharisees" (See vii. 50—52.). At the Crucifixion he can shrink back no more, but, doubtless stricken in heart at the divine majesty of that Death, and beholding the fulfilment of the words spoken to him at this first interview with Jesus (See 14.), he openly confesses Christ by joining another once timid disciple, Joseph of Arimathæa, in giving to their Lord an honourable Burial (See on xix. 39.).

2. "Came to Jesus by night" It was spiritual darkness with him, as well as natural, when he came: but he came to the "Light of the "world", and light began to dawn upon his soul. By his address we see plainly that he did not yet know Christ as the Messiah. He only saw in Him a "Teacher come from God." Yet he was honestly seeking more light, and behold how bright a flood of light was poured upon him as he listened to Christ's wondrous words! It is surely true of spiritual knowledge that "he that seeketh findeth"; and we see too that God does not despise even the timid seeker. He will not quench the smoking flax (See on St. Matt. xii. 20.).

3. "Jesus answered" &c. The words of Jesus are not a direct answer to the words of Nicodemus, but the word "answer" is very often used in the Gospels in a wider sense to signify any sort of reply, even sometimes to unexpressed thoughts (See St. Luke vii. 40.).

"Except *a man* be born again," &c. The word "again" in this expression may be translated 'from above' (See *Margin.*), and so to be "born again" seems to be the same as to be "born of God", an expression which St. John often uses (See on 1 St. John iii. 9. iv. 7. v. 1, 4.), for that which is "from above" is "of God." By the "king-"dom of God" is certainly here meant the kingdom as existing *here on earth.* This is our Lord's constant use of the expression (See on St. Matt. iii. 2.). Thus by seeing the kingdom of God is not meant (as many think) reaching heaven. On the other hand we must not understand the expression as meaning the mere formal entrance into the visible Church or Kingdom. It rather speaks of an entrance in the truest and fullest sense into the privileges and blessedness of that kingdom, which Christ came to set up on earth, so as to see and comprehend its mysteries and hidden glories. Our Lord then in this

3. "*Verily, verily.*" See on i. 51.
"*Except a man.*" It may be worth while to point out that the word "man" is not in the original, either here or in verse 5. Ignorant persons have sometimes used the English expression as an argument against Infant Baptism, whereas the original word is quite general,—'Except one be born', or 'Whosoever is 'not born' &c.

A.D. 27. 4 Nicodemus saith unto Him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, [e] Except *a man* be born of water and *of* the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

[e] Mark 16. 16. Acts 2. 38.

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verse declares plainly the necessity of the new birth in order to a spiritual insight and entrance into His kingdom. Of the nature of this new birth He speaks more fully in the following verses. The words however plainly refer to the ignorance of Nicodemus as to our Lord's true nature and office. They show him the secret of his unworthy notions of Christ. He had not the new birth; therefore he could not see the mysteries of the kingdom of God.

4. **"How can a man" &c.** We can hardly suppose Nicodemus to ask this question seriously. No doubt he failed to catch our Lord's real meaning, but he could not have imagined that He spoke of a second *natural* birth. His question therefore must be taken as a sort of exaggerated way of expressing his inability to understand Christ's saying. St. Augustine uses the words of Nicodemus to illustrate the truth that there is but "one Baptism", which may not be repeated, saying, "He knew but the one birth which is from Adam and Eve; "that which is from God and the Church he knew not yet. He knew "but the parents which beget unto death; he knew not yet the parents "which beget unto life. Whereas there be two births, he understood "one. One is of earth, the other of heaven; one of the flesh, the "other of the Spirit; one of mortality, the other of eternity; one "of male and female, the other of God and the Church. And both "these births are single; neither of them can be repeated. As of the "natural birth there can be no repetition, so neither of Baptism." The question of Nicodemus and answer of our Lord concerning the one sacrament should be compared with the question of the Jews and answer of our Lord concerning the other (See on vi. 52, 53.).

5. **"Born of water and *of* the Spirit."** Our Lord thus enlarges, and in part explains, His simpler words "born again" (ver. 3.). He declares the outward sign, and the inward Agent, of the new or heavenly birth. That in the mention of Water our Lord speaks of Baptism can hardly be doubted. To understand it otherwise is to explain away the simple sense of the words. The wise and pious Hooker gives this rule:—"I hold it for a most infallible rule in expositions "of sacred Scripture, that where a literal construction will stand, the "farthest from the letter is commonly the worst." And with regard to the unanimous consent of the primitive Church, the same writer affirms that "Of all the ancients there is not one to be named, that "ever did otherwise expound or allege this place than as implying "external Baptism." It should be added here that all ancient writers from the very first use the term 'regeneration', or 'new birth', solely of Baptism and its effects, and never in the sense, often given to it in modern days, of 'conversion' or 'renewal.' It is no doubt partly from giving to the word 'regeneration' as used in our Baptismal Service this novel meaning that much of the difficulty and confusion which often surround the subject have arisen. Our Church uses the word in its primitive sense, of the new birth into the family of God's

6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and A.D. 27.
that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

adopted children in Baptism. She founds her Baptismal service on this verse, quoting it in the very opening sentence, which says:—"Dearly beloved, forasmuch as all men are conceived and born in "sin; and that our Saviour Christ saith, None can enter into the "kingdom of God except he be regenerate and born anew of Water "and of the Holy Ghost."

But it must be asked, Of what water would Nicodemus think when he heard Christ's words? It was the custom of the Jews to baptize proselytes, that is, converts to the Jewish religion (See on St. Matt. iii. 6. xxiii. 15.), and to speak of them as *new-born*. Thus Nicodemus might have thought of this, and perhaps it is to his dulness in not doing so that our Lord refers when He asks, "Art thou a master of "Israel, and knowest not these things?" (10.). But we can hardly doubt that Nicodemus would at once think of that wonderful man preaching and baptizing in the wilderness, to whose baptism the "Pha-"risees and lawyers" as a body refused to come (See St. Luke vii. 30.). "When he heard of being born again *of water* for the kingdom of God, "it would have flashed upon the mind of Nicodemus with as much "clearness as though Christ had spoken it—Hast thou then forgotten "him who came baptizing in the wilderness—My forerunner? Did "not he testify that you must become new men, if you would enter "the kingdom of heaven, even as you require it of the Gentiles, when "you baptize them as Jews?" (*Stier.*). But St. John the Baptist had expressly declared that while he baptized with water, Christ should baptize with the Holy Ghost (See on St. Matt. iii. 11, and St. John i. 33.). What then the Baptist had separated, Christ here unites, *thereby prophetically declaring the true nature of that holy Sacrament which He Himself was about afterwards to ordain.* If it be thought strange that Jesus should speak thus of a Sacrament not yet fully ordained, it is to be noted that while in this discourse we have prophetic words concerning the one Sacrament, in the 6th Chapter we have prophetic words concerning the other (See on vi. 53.). Also our Lord in like manner speaks beforehand under the figure of a fountain of water of the Holy Ghost, "which they that believe on Him should "receive" (vii. 37—39.). The truth is, although Baptism as a Christian Sacrament, administered in the Name of the Holy Trinity, was not yet instituted, yet many in "John's Baptism" openly sealed and confirmed their repentance and obtained remission of sins, and, being thereby brought to Christ, received afterwards the Holy Ghost, and so were fully "born again." It was such cleansing and renewal, signified in the washing of baptismal water, and wrought by the Spirit of God, which Nicodemus lacked.

It only remains to add that, whereas we have occupied much time with the "Water", because that needs the most explanation, yet the "Spirit" is infinitely greater, inasmuch as the one is the shadow and the other the substance; the one the outward sign and the other the thing signified; the one the means and the other the grace. We believe, according to the teaching of our Church, that, where Baptism is duly administered, and where man resists not God's grace (as did Simon the sorcerer in Samaria, See Acts viii. 13, 21.), there the inward grace always accompanies the outward means. But we do not assert

A.D. 27. 7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be
born [2] again.

[2] Or. *from above.*

8 [f] The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou
[f] Eccles. 11. 5. 1 Cor. 2. 11. hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence
it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one
that is born of the Spirit.

[g] ch. 6. 52, 60. 9 Nicodemus answered and said unto Him, [g] How
can these things be?

10 Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou
a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?

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that the inward grace can never be given without the outward means, for that would be to limit God's power and mercy (See on Acts x. 47.).

6. "That which is born" &c. That is, the nature we receive from our natural parents is, like their own, fallen, corrupt, sinful: while the nature which is implanted in us by the Spirit of God in our new birth is, like its Author, spiritual and divine. We must take notice that under the term "flesh" here is included the whole natural man, his soul quite as much as his body; and that the "Spirit" does not mean man's spiritual part, for that is part of his corrupt nature—his "flesh", but that divine Gift which is added to man's nature, and is the presence within him of the Spirit of God.

7. "Marvel not." It is thought by some that there was a pause in our Lord's discourse between the last verse and this, during which "Nicodemus kept silence awhile, sunk in thought,—a pause which we "could desire for many of our readers" (*Stier.*). At all events he ceases for a while to argue, and, showing his wonder by his look, silently drinks in the precious teaching vouchsafed him.

8. "The wind" &c. Jesus would say, 'Thou marvellest when I 'tell thee of the Spirit's hidden work: yet think if there be not like 'marvels in the world of nature.' The *effects* of the wind are readily seen and felt, and yet it is itself invisible, and hidden in its movements. So the *effects* of the new birth and of the Spirit's presence are plain, while the working of that Spirit Itself is a hidden mystery. To question in what manner or at what moment the Spirit's work in our souls began is of less importance than to ask 'Are we bearing the fruits 'of the Spirit now?'

9. "How can these things be?" Nicodemus is still marvelling. But this second question is far humbler than the first. He feels his ignorance, and seeks to be enlightened. Yet it would have been better to have been able to say, "Lord, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief." He is in fault in that he thinks he must understand in order to believe.

10. "Art thou a master of Israel," &c. As an appointed teacher of others Nicodemus ought surely to have known something of these things. The very types of baptism in the Scriptures might have taught him much, or at least have prepared him to receive readily Christ's teaching. Thus the Spirit of God brooding upon the face of the water before the Creation; the Flood wherein Noah and his family were saved by water (See 1 St. Pet. iii. 20, 21.); the passing of the Israelites through the Red Sea (See 1 Cor. x. 2.); the cleansing of Naaman

11 [h] Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that We do know, and testify that We have seen; and [i] ye receive not Our witness. A. D. 27.

12 If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you *of* heavenly things?

13 And [k] no man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, *even* the Son of man which is in heaven.

[h] Matt. 11. 27. ch. 1. 18. & 7. 16. & 8. 28. & 12. 49. & 14. 24.
[i] ver. 32.
[k] Prov. 30. 4. ch. 6. 33, 38, 51, 62. & 16. 28. Acts 2. 34. 1 Cor. 15. 47. Eph. 4. 9, 10.

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the Syrian by washing in the Jordan (See 2 Kings v. 14.); these might have prepared a Jewish teacher to accept the truths which Jesus was revealing. But indeed the fault of Nicodemus was the fault of all the Jews. They lacked all spiritual insight into their own Scriptures. They erred, "not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God" (St. Matt. xxii. 29.). They read the letter, and not the spirit. Thus were they "blind leaders of the blind" (St. Matt. xv. 14.).

11. "We speak." Some have supposed our Lord to be speaking here in the name of the blessed Trinity. This may be so: but it seems simpler to suppose that by "We" He means "I", according to a form of speech which (though not met with elsewhere in holy Scripture) is familiar to us, and is the usual form in these days with royal persons. By testifying that which He had seen, Christ signifies that the truths He was revealing were such as to Him were as perfectly clear as though seen with the bodily eye,—or perhaps rather that they were among those things which in His eternal unity with the Father He had divinely seen and known as the Father's will (Comp. 32. viii. 26, 28. xv. 15.).

"Ye receive not." 'Ye Jews'—not Nicodemus only, though including him, as addressed to him.

12. "If I have told you" &c. By "earthly things" our Lord means the things He had spoken concerning the new birth, which is a matter belonging to our earthly life, though of heavenly origin. By "heavenly things" He means such higher mysteries of His kingdom and of His nature as He only revealed by degrees, and many of which He saw fit never to reveal at all. Observe how He says even to His chosen Apostles just before His Death, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now" (xvi. 12.). Much less could one like Nicodemus bear them.

13. "No man hath ascended" &c. That is, so as to "speak" and "testify" what he himself has "seen" (11.), and to reveal to man "heavenly things" (12.). "He alone who had been in heaven, and "was still in heaven, could reveal heavenly truths" (*P. Young.*). We need not understand Christ to say that He Himself had as yet ascended up into heaven, though the words at first sight seem to say so. The meaning is plain. No man had ascended up to heaven so as to learn heavenly things. He only can reveal these who came down from heaven to take to Himself our human nature and to become "Son of man", but who in His Divine nature is still "in Heaven", the eternal Word, Himself God, and "with God" (i. 1.). Yet Jesus says—"the Son of "*man* which is in Heaven," calling Himself by His strictly *human* title; and this teaches us that the Divine and Human natures of our

A.D. 27. 14 [l]And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the
[l] Num. 21. 9. wilderness, even so [m]must the Son of man be
[m] ch. 8. 28. & 12. 32. lifted up:

15 that whosoever believeth in Him should not
[n] ver. 36. ch. 6. 47. perish, but [n]have eternal life.

[o] Rom. 5. 8. 1 John 4. 9. 16 [o]For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Lord are not to be separated, for, from the hour of His Incarnation, "two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead and the "Manhood, were joined together in One Person, never to be divided, "whereof is one Christ" (Art. ii.). Thus, even *in His human nature*, Christ, the "Son of man", the One undivided Christ, was both in heaven and on earth. And thus also now the same undivided Christ is, *in His human nature*, both in heaven and on earth. Yet then His human *Body* (which is only a part of His human nature) was on earth: now it is in heaven.

14. "As Moses lifted up" &c. Christ does not wholly keep back from Nicodemus the "heavenly things", which as yet he was not fitted to understand. In all God's teaching, He reveals to us more than we can understand. His plan is to state to us truths, which, conveying little to the careless, unfold themselves more and more to the earnest and thoughtful believer. Christ has already spoken wonderful "heavenly things" concerning His own nature (in 13.). He now proceeds to declare the very central truth and mystery of the kingdom of heaven, namely Redemption through His own Death. The type of the Brazen Serpent (See Numbers xxi. 6—9.) is so familiar to most that it is not necessary to explain it minutely. No type could more strikingly picture to us that Saviour, of whom it is written that God "made Him "to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the right-"eousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. v. 21.).

"Lifted up." The usual expression for crucified (See viii. 28. xii. 32, 33.).

15. "Believeth." This answers to the *looking* of the bitten Israelites. Jesus seems to say to us, "Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the "ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else" (Isai. xlv. 22.). "And when He bids us thus look to Him, it is not surely "of any single act, still less is it of any mere passing feeling of the "mind that He speaks. What He means is that our whole lives should "be one continued looking unto Him, one continued act of faith in "that undeserved and complete deliverance, which He wrought for "us upon the Cross. Jesus Christ, lifted up upon the Cross, should "draw our whole hearts to Him" (*P. Young.*).

16. "For God so loved the world," &c. "Comfortable words" indeed, as our beautiful Communion Service calls them! These are not words to comment upon, but to *feel*. In this glorious verse every word is a sermon. Mark the greatness of the Father's love:—"God "*so* loved". Mark the breadth of that love:—"God so loved the "*world*". Mark the priceлessness of the Sacrifice:—"His only-begotten "Son". Mark the freedom of the offer of salvation:—"Whosoever". Mark the condition of salvation:—"Believeth". Mark the peril of

17 [p] For God sent not His Son into the world A.D. 27.
to condemn the world; but that the world through [p] Luke 9. 56. ch. 5. 45. & 8. 15. & 12. 47. 1 John 4. 14.
Him might be saved.

18 [q] He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, [q] ch. 5. 24. & 6. 40, 47. & 20. 31.
because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

19 And this is the condemnation, [r] that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. [r] ch. 1. 4, 9, 10, 11. & 8. 12.

20 For [s] every one that doeth evil hateth the [s] Job 24. 13, 17. Eph. 5. 13.

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unbelief: "Perish". Mark the greatness of the salvation:—"Ever-"lasting Life."

17. **"God sent not" &c.** God's purpose in sending His Son into the world was wholly love. It is quite true that the *result* of Christ's coming is the condemnation of many (See on 18, and on ix. 39.), but its *purpose* was the salvation of all. "So then, as much as in the "Physician lieth, He is come to heal the sick. That man is his "own destroyer, who will not observe the orders of the Physician" (*St. Augustine.*).

18. **"Condemned already."** Not so much *God*-condemned *for* not believing, as *self*-condemned *by* not believing. And this "already", for, being in a state of condemnation by nature, the unbeliever remains in that state, and escapes not from it (See on 36.). Moreover in one sense the judgment is being evermore pronounced, for to God's eye each one's state is always perfectly clear. "The Lord knoweth them "that are His". "He knoweth the wheat on His own threshing-"floor, knoweth the chaff; knoweth the corn, knoweth the tares" (*St. Augustine.*).

"In the name" &c. To believe in the name of any one is an expression signifying simply to believe in that person.

19. **"This is the condemnation," &c.** That is, This is the ground, or reason, of the condemnation of him who refuses to believe—namely that he has had the offer of the Light, and yet chooses darkness. By "Light" we can hardly doubt that Jesus speaks here, as elsewhere, of Himself—the "Light of the world" (See viii. 12. ix. 5. xii. 46. and compare i. 9.). This beautiful title our Lord adopts in respect of the truth which He came to reveal.

"Because their deeds were evil." Men did not reject Christ and His teaching because their reason is not satisfied, but because their hearts were not changed. Very often unbelief has its root more in the heart than in the head. Many believe not because they do not *wish* to believe. They love sin too well to accept that which would at once require them to forsake sin.

20. **"Every one that doeth evil" &c.** Not only "doeth", but *loveth* evil,—doeth it as his habit and practice. Such an one dare not come to the Light, for he knows, if he did, his evil would stand out clear in all its hideousness. His deeds would be "reproved",—that is, shown forth in their true character. Observe how St. Paul speaks, surely with the present passage in his mind, "All things that are

A.D. 27. light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds
2 Or, *discovered.* should be [2] reproved.

21 But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

22 ¶ After these things came Jesus and His disciples into the land of Judæa; and there He
t ch. 4. 2. tarried with them, [t] and baptized.

23 ¶ And John also was baptizing in Ænon
u 1 Sam. 9. 4. near to [u] Salim, because there was much water
x Matt. 3. 5, 6. there: [x] and they came, and were baptized.

"reproved are made manifest by the light; for whatsoever doth make "manifest is light" (Eph. v. 13.).

21. "**He that doeth truth.**" A very remarkable expression, showing the close connection between truth and righteousness. We must not say that "truth" is here put for 'righteousness', but rather that to 'do truth' means to do that righteousness which the truth teaches us to do. Such an one is not afraid of the Light, but, desiring nothing so much as to gain more light and self-knowledge, and to correct and amend whatever is still amiss, comes gladly to the Light that he may become such as God would have him to be.

"**Wrought in God.**" Wrought in the power of God, and in the conscious presence of God.

With these words does Jesus dismiss His timid disciple. He had come in the darkness to the "true Light." So far well. But the body may come when the spirit stays behind. Nicodemus had come outwardly. Jesus was preparing him to come inwardly—to come laying bare all his soul before the Light, that in the blaze of that Light he might see—first himself, and then the infinite love of God.

22. Jesus baptizing by His disciples.

22. "**The land of Judæa.**" That is, the country districts. Our Lord was "in Jerusalem at the passover" (ii. 23.) shortly before this, and it is probable the conversation with Nicodemus took place there. So that this departure would only be from Jerusalem the capital city into the surrounding parts of Judæa.

"**Baptized.**" Not Himself, but by His disciples, as we are expressly told (iv. 2.). But of what sort was this Baptism? We are not told, and therefore we know not, whether any greater grace accompanied this Baptism of Christ than accompanied that of St. John. "There "was probably at that time not much difference between the two "baptisms, neither being accompanied by the gift of the Spirit, and "both of them having for their object to draw disciples to Christ" (*P. Young.*).

23—36. Testimony of St. John the Baptist.

23. "**Ænon near to Salim.**" The situation of these places is not known, but they were probably in Judæa (See iv. 1—3.).

"**Much water.**" Literally, 'many waters,' probably springs or streams.

24 For [y] John was not yet cast into prison. A.D. 27.

25 Then there arose a question between *some* of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying.

26 And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, He that was with thee beyond Jordan, [z] to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all *men* come to Him.

27 John answered and said, [a] A man can [2] receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.

28 Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, [b] I am not the Christ, but [c] that I am sent before Him.

29 [d] He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but [e] the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled.

[y] Matt. 14. 3.

[z] ch. 1. 7, 15, 27, 34.

[a] 1 Cor. 4. 7. Heb. 5. 4. James 1. 17.

[2] Or, *take unto himself.*

[b] ch. 1. 20, 27.

[c] Mal. 3. 1. Mark 1. 2. Luke 1. 17.

[d] Matt. 22. 2. 2 Cor. 11. 2. Eph. 5. 25, 27. Rev. 21. 9.

[e] Cant. 5. 1.

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25. "About purifying." That is, probably, which of the two baptisms, that of John or that of Jesus, was the more effectual in purifying and cleansing from sin. It is possible (as Alford supposes) that the disciples of John, jealous of their master's honour, taught the necessity of his baptism "for the remission of sins" and as a preparation for faith in Christ; while the "Jews," with whom they disputed, may have been some who, knowing of Christ's baptism, urged that John's could not be necessary to prepare men for Christ whom John preached, since Christ Himself was now baptizing. But the actual question in dispute can only be guessed at.

26. "The same baptizeth," &c. Plainly St. John the Baptist's own disciples brought this report. They were jealous of the success of Christ's Baptism (See also iv. 1.), and showed by their language concerning Him how ignorant they were of His true nature and office.

27. "A man can receive" &c. Perhaps this would be more clearly expressed in English if it were, 'A man can *take to himself* nothing.' The Baptist seems to mean, 'I cannot take to myself any greatness 'or authority beyond what has been given me from Heaven. My 'place is to be the lowly Fore-runner, and more than that I may not 'be.' St. John's whole speech is an abasing of himself and exalting of Christ.

29. "He that hath the bride" &c. The Baptist declares the wide difference between Christ and himself by describing Christ as the Bridegroom and himself as only the Bridegroom's friend. Christ is frequently spoken of as the Bridegroom, whose bride is His Church, which He espoused when on earth, and will come to take home at the end. St. John, like a bridegroom's faithful friend and attendant,

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24. "*John was not yet cast into prison.*" See *Note* on St. Matt. iv. 12. This is the only mention by St. John of the Baptist's imprisonment, which took place shortly after this, and ended in his martyrdom.

28. "*I said,*" *&c.* The Baptist plainly refers to his words as recorded in i. 20, 30.

A. D. 27.

30 He must increase, but I *must* decrease.

31 [f] He that cometh from above [g] is above all: [h] he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: [i] He that cometh from heaven is above all.

32 And [k] what He hath seen and heard, that He testifieth; and no man receiveth His testimony.

33 He that hath received His testimony [l] hath set to his seal that God is true.

34 [m] For He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit [n] by measure *unto Him.*

[f] ver. 13. ch. 8. 23.
[g] Matt. 28. 18.
[h] ch. 1. 15, 27. Rom. 9. 5.
[i] 1 Cor. 15. 47.
[k] ch. 6. 33. 1 Cor. 15. 47. Eph. 1. 21. Phil. 2. 9.
[l] ver. 11. ch. 8. 26. & 15. 15. 1 Rom. 3. 4. 1 John 5. 10.
[m] ch. 7. 16.
[n] ch. 1. 16.

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rejoiced in his Lord's voice and in his Lord's honour. When he heard that "all men" flocked to Christ, his pure unselfish "joy" was "fulfilled."

30. "He must increase," &c. That is, in honour and glory and greatness before men. His name must spread; mine must fade away.

31. "He that cometh from above" &c. The Baptist is setting forth with all the strength he can the boundless distance between Christ and himself. Mark his testimony to Christ's Divine nature. He is "above all"—the Most High—and this is twice repeated. Whereas he himself, the Fore-runner, is "of the earth", "earthly", and "speaketh of the earth." That is, he is a mere man, of no heavenly origin like Christ, not able to reveal heavenly mysteries, but, though a prophet, and more than a prophet, only speaking as an earthly messenger, things learnt on earth, things given him to speak as an "earthen vessel."

32. "What He hath seen" &c. The Baptist here says of Christ what Christ has already said of Himself in His conversation with Nicodemus (See on 11.).

"No man receiveth" &c. So the great prophet mourned eight hundred years before, crying, "Who hath believed our report? And "to whom is the Arm of the Lord revealed?" (Isai. liii. 1.). By "no man" St. John means 'scarcely any one', for in the next verse he speaks of some who did receive Christ's testimony. How instructive is the contrast,—"All men come to Him" (26.), and "No man re-"ceiveth His testimony"! It is easy to flock to Christ, and join the company of His professed disciples, and yet not to accept simply and fully His Divine teaching and commandments. As many once thronged and pressed around our Lord (See St. Luke viii. 45.), and yet only one touched Him in faith, so many even now "come to Him", yet but few heartily and honestly "receive His testimony."

33. "Hath set to his seal." That is, 'hath set his seal to God's 'truth',—'hath solemnly and distinctly affirmed his belief that God is 'true', inasmuch as he has accepted the words and witness of Him whom "God hath sent," and who "speaketh the words of God" (34.). To refuse and reject Christ's testimony is as much as to say that God is not true, for Christ's words are God's words,—Christ's testimony is God's truth (See viii. 26. xii. 49, 50.).

34. "By measure." That is, in any *limited* measure. To man

35 [o] The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hand. A.D. 27.

36 [p] He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

[o] Matt. 11. 27. & 28. 18. Luke 10. 22. ch. 5. 20, 22. & 13. 3. & 17. 2. Heb. 2. 8.

[p] ver. 15, 16. Hab. 2. 4. ch. 1. 12. & 6. 47. Rom. 1. 17. 1 John 5. 10.

CHAPTER IV.

1 *Christ talketh with a woman of Samaria, and revealeth Himself unto her.* 27 *His disciples marvel.* 31 *He declareth to them His zeal to God's glory.* 39 *Many Samaritans believe on Him.* 43 *He departeth into Galilee, and healeth the ruler's son that lay sick at Capernaum.*

WHEN therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and [a] baptized more disciples than John,

[a] ch. 3. 22, 26.

God gives His Spirit by measure, "dividing to every man severally "as He will" (1 Cor. xii. 11.). Not so with Christ; for "in Him "dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. ii. 9.). God giveth the Spirit in perfect fulness to His beloved Son (See on St. Matt. iii. 16.).

35. **"Hath given all things"** &c. And therefore, with "all things", the fulness of the Spirit. Again observe how the Baptist's words agree with Christ's own, "All things are delivered unto Me of My Father" (St. Matt. xi. 27. and compare St. John xiii. 3.). This bestowal of all things by the Father upon the Son is one of those mysteries belonging to the eternal relations of the Three Persons of the everblessed Trinity to each other, and also to the union of our Lord's Godhead and Manhood, which we feel ourselves too feeble to grasp here on earth. We must accept the "testimony", and hope to know more elsewhere (See however upon St. Matt. xxviii. 18.).

36. **"Hath everlasting life."** Here, as elsewhere, we find "ever-"lasting life" spoken of as a *present* possession (Compare vi. 47, 54. 1 St. John v. 11, 12.). It is not 'shall have', but "hath." For in truth the spiritual life here is but the first imperfect stage of the heavenly life hereafter. Our "everlasting life" is already begun on earth. "Everlasting life" is spoken of in the same manner as the "kingdom of heaven." Each is present with us here on earth; though each to be purified and perfected hereafter in heaven.

"The wrath of God abideth on him." Mark the word "abideth." There is no need for that wrath to be called forth upon him. He is already by nature under it—a child of wrath—and he only remains so. He escapes not from it, when he might (See on 18.).

Very marvellous is the depth and clearness of this testimony of the Baptist to our Lord. It is hard to believe that after this he could have had any very serious doubts as to Jesus being the true Messiah, though he may, in the loneliness of his prison, have been sorely perplexed, and may have desired some comforting assurance of the truth which he did not really doubt (See on St. Matt. xi. 3.).

CHAPTER IV.

1—42. Christ at Sychar.

1. **"The Pharisees had heard"** &c. The success and popularity of

A.D. 27. 2 (though Jesus Himself baptized not, but His disciples,)

3 He left Judæa, and departed again into Galilee.

4 And He must needs go through Samaria.

5 Then cometh He to a city of Samaria, which

[b] Gen. 33. 19. & 48. 22. Josh. 24. 32. is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground [b] that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.

Christ would, He well knew, stir up the jealous hatred of the Pharisees. This He would not do, both for their sakes, and because His hour was not come. Therefore He left Judæa for Galilee; a great Example of avoiding enmity by every lawful concession.

2. **"Jesus Himself baptized not."** Yet in the verse before it is said that Jesus baptized. "Jesus baptized, and baptized not. Yes; He "baptized, in that it was He that cleansed: He baptized not, for "that it was not He that dipped." The earthly minister performed the outward act: the heavenly Master gave the inward blessing. And it is so still. The Baptism of Christ's ministers is Christ's Baptism. Therefore "let a man draw near without fear to the minister who is beneath; "for he hath the Master who is above" (*St. Augustine*).

4. **"Through Samaria."** Which lay between Judæa to the South and Galilee to the North (See *Map.*) In travelling from one to the other the only way to avoid passing through Samaria was to cross the river Jordan twice, travelling along its Eastern bank for the whole length of Samaria (See on St. Matt. x. 5.).

5. **"Sychar."** The same as the ancient Sichem or Shechem. This was the first place in which Abraham stopped when, at God's call, he came into the land of Canaan. It was here that God promised to give the land to his seed, and here that he built an altar to the Lord (See Gen. xii. 6, 7.). Jacob afterwards came there, and bought a "parcel "of a field", on which he too built an altar (Gen. xxxiii. 18—20.). It appears that this field was the special "portion" which Jacob, when dying, "gave to his son Joseph", although in the history of the gift Jacob

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3 "*He left Judæa,*" *&c.* It is a very doubtful question whether this visit to Galilee (See *Note* on i. 43.) is the same as that related by the first three Evangelists immediately after their accounts of the Temptation (See St. Matt. iv. 12. and *Note.* St. Mark i. 14. St. Luke iv. 14.), or whether that journey to Galilee should not be placed still later, namely, between the fifth and sixth chapters of this Gospel. In other words the question is, whether the history to the end of the third or to the end of the fifth chapter of this Gospel is to be put in between the Temptation and the departure to Galilee of the other Gospels. The chief argument turns upon the time when John the Baptist was cast into prison, by which St. Matthew and St. Mark date our Lord's departure into Galilee. It seems probable from the first verse of this chapter that St. John was still baptizing, and therefore not yet imprisoned. If so, then this visit to Galilee was not the same as that referred to by the other Evangelists, but a second earlier and short visit, from which our Lord returned to Jerusalem for the Feast named in v. 1. The events in chapter v. took place at Jerusalem, and in vi. 1. we again find our Lord in Galilee for the third time since His Baptism. He had probably been there for the greater part of the year before the Passover which marks the date of chapter vi. (See vi. 4.): and it is thought that the journey to Galilee named by the other Evangelists immediately after the Temptation was that which began this long sojourn there, taking place soon after the events named in chapter v. Thus the other Evangelists omit from their record the first year of our Lord's public ministry, namely from His Baptism, which took place before this the first of His four Passovers (See on v. 1.) to the journey to Galilee, which followed His second.

6 Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, A. D. 27.
being wearied with *His* journey, sat thus on the well: *and* it was about the sixth hour.

7 There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give Me to drink.

8 (For His disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.)

9 Then saith the woman of Samaria unto Him, How is it that Thou, being a Jew, askest drink of

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describes it as a portion which he "took out of the hand of the Amorite" by force (Gen. xlviii. 22.). This may be accounted for by supposing that the Amorites had overrun the district, and seized upon this possession of Jacob, and that he had afterwards recovered it out of their hands. Here too it was that "the bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel "brought up out of Egypt" were buried (Josh. xxiv. 32.). Shechem or Sychar lay in the heart of Samaria, between mounts Ebal and Gerizim (See *Map.*), on the latter of which the Samaritans had built a temple in opposition to that at Jerusalem (See 20.).

6. Jacob's well was there." Few spots in all the Holy Land can be so certainly made out as this. The well is there to this day, and being very deep is much sought on account of the coolness of the water. We have no account of the making of this well by Jacob in the Old Testament, but we read of Abraham and Isaac digging wells (See Gen. xxi. 25. xxvi. 18—22.), so that it was the custom in those days.

"Wearied with His journey." Blessed weariness! How near does this seem to bring the Saviour to us! And what force does it give to His loving sympathy with the weary, when He cries, "Come unto Me, "all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (St. Matt. xi. 28.)!

"Sat thus." That is, 'in His weariness'—'being thus wearied.'

"The sixth hour." That is, noon; the Jews reckoning the hours from six in the morning (See *Note*.).

7. "A woman of Samaria." "Samaria" here means the province, not the city, for this woman belonged to Sychar. "She 'came to draw "'water' from the well, little suspecting that before her return to the "city she should draw her first draught of living water out of the Well "of Salvation!" (*Burgon.*).

"Give Me to drink." Probably the woman had let down her pitcher and drawn up the water before Jesus spoke to her. Whether He now drank of the water, or in His thirst for this woman's soul forgot His own bodily thirst, we know not.

9. "How is it" &c. The woman knew Jesus to be a Jew either by His dress or His language.

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6. "*The sixth hour.*" Some have tried to make out that St. John, writing long after the other Evangelists, and in Asia Minor, used the same mode of reckoning the hours as we do now, that being a method known in the East. But this does not seem correct (See *Note* on xix. 14.), and it is better to suppose St. John to be speaking after the Jewish method.

A.D. 27. me, which am a woman of Samaria? for [c] the Jews
[c] 2 Kings 17. 24. Luke 9. 52, 53. Acts 10. 28. have no dealings with the Samaritans.

10 Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give Me to drink; thou wouldest have asked
[d] Isai. 12. 3. & 44. 3. Jer. 2. 13. Zech. 13. 1. & 14. 8. of Him, and He would have given thee [d] living water.

11 The woman saith unto Him, Sir, Thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast Thou that living water?

12 Art Thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?

13 Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:

"The Jews have no dealings" &c. These words are not part of what the woman said, but an explanation put in by the Evangelist to account for her surprise at our Lord's request. The Jews would hold no familiar intercourse with the Samaritans, nor ask any favour of them (See on St. Matt. x. 5.); and "it may be thought that our Saviour's "request, and gracious manner,—so full of Divine Love and gentleness "unspeakable,—at once opened the heart of this woman" (*Burgon.*), so that she gladly entered into conversation with Him.

10. "The gift of God." Namely, that great and most blessed gift which I am about to offer thee—the "living water"—"the water that *I* "shall give" (14.). By "living water" is meant water freshly flowing from a spring, a beautiful image of the life-giving purifying Spirit (See vii. 38, 39.). We must not pass by the words, "Thou wouldest have "asked." Without asking there is no receiving. Our Saviour elsewhere tells us that God will "give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him" (St. Luke xi. 13.).

11. "Sir, Thou hast nothing" &c. Like Nicodemus (See iii. 4.), and the Jews at Capernaum (See vi. 52.), the woman of Samaria takes our Lord's words literally, when they are meant spiritually. Or perhaps, more strictly, she speaks *as if* she took them literally, not understanding them, but with a dim feeling that they may contain some farther meaning.

"The well is deep." Said to be thirty five yards deep, and to contain below that five yards in depth of pure fresh water.

12. "Art Thou greater" &c. The woman seems to be thinking of our Lord's words, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that "saith unto thee, Give Me to drink" (10.), and her question seems to mean, 'Canst Thou give us any greater gift, or any better water, than 'this which Jacob gave us? Dost Thou make Thyself out to be greater 'than he?' Observe this Samaritan woman claims to be sprung from Jacob—"our father Jacob." The Samaritans were in reality a mixed race, partly Jews and partly Assyrians (See on St. Matt. x. 5.), but they were anxious to claim the rights and privileges of Jews, and ready to boast of their Jewish descent, doubtful though it was.

14 but [e] whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him [f] shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

15 [g] The woman saith unto Him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.

16 Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither.

A.D. 27.

[e] ch. 6. 35, 58.

[f] ch. 7. 38.

[g] See chap. 6. 34. & 17. 2, 3. Rom. 6. 23. 1 John 5. 20.

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14. "The water that I shall give him." This is plainly the gift of the Holy Spirit, for on another occasion when our Lord used similar language, saying, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink. "He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly "shall flow rivers of living water," the Evangelist adds this explanation, —"But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him "should receive; for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that "Jesus was not yet glorified" (vii. 37—39.). This "Water" *Christ* gives, and yet He says "I will pray the Father, and *He* shall send you another "Comforter" (xiv. 16.). It is the gift equally of the Father and of the Son.

"Shall never thirst;" &c. That is, shall never thirst for the unsatisfying draughts of this world's pleasures. But then the drinking of the heavenly water must be a *continued* drinking. One short draught does not satisfy for ever. There must be a constant, daily, resort to the well, and an eager drinking of the water. Yet for this drinking the thirsty have not to take a weary journey, and then to draw the water with labour from a deep well. There is "a well of water springing up" within them. He that seeks his refreshment in this water "shall never "thirst", because the moment he needs it the supply is ready. True, some who "have tasted of the heavenly Gift, and were made partakers "of the Holy Ghost" (Hebr. vi. 4.), do "fall away", and thirst again for the polluted and poisonous draughts of sinful pleasure. But the defect is not in the water, but in their sinful hearts. The spring of living water fails not, but furnishes abundant strength and refreshment to bring the faithful pilgrim to "everlasting life." This saying—"shall "never thirst"—describes that "joy and peace", which are the fruit of the Spirit, and the portion of the Christian (though only in a gradual, and always in a very imperfect, measure) here below.

15. "Sir, give me this water," &c. The woman could not have failed to see that there was *some* deep spiritual meaning in our Lord's words, yet she certainly did not as yet discern that meaning. So her words here, like those of Nicodemus as to the new birth (See on 11, and on iii. 4.), are rather a way of expressing her inability to understand Christ, than a proof that she understood Him to speak of any actual water. It is admirably said, "She does not clearly know what "she says or would say: she wavers between the dawning apprehen- "sion of the higher meaning, and the clinging of her mind to the "lower" (*Stier.*).

16. "Go, call thy husband." Why this sudden command? Probably

A. D. 27.

17 The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband:

18 for thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly.

h Luk. 7. 16. & 24. 19. ch. 6. 14. & 7. 40.

19 The woman saith unto Him, Sir, [h] I perceive that Thou art a prophet.

i Judg. 9. 7.

20 Our fathers worshipped in [i] this mountain; and ye say, that in [k] Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.

k Deut. 12. 5, 11. 1 Kin. 9. 3. 2 Chron. 7. 12.

21 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe Me, the hour cometh, [l] when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.

l Mal. 1. 11. 1 Tim. 2. 8.

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because the time was come for other dealings with this poor woman's conscience. Jesus was speaking to her of the gift of the Holy Ghost. This she fails to understand. And now He leads her round by another road. The first work of the Holy Ghost is to *convince of sin* (See on xvi. 8.). So Jesus suddenly lays His Finger (but oh how tenderly!) upon the sore of her great sin, and gently unfolds it to her. She must feel that, before she can go on to learn other lessons of the Holy Spirit.

18. "Not thy husband." That is, 'not thy lawful husband.' We need not fear to imagine the look and manner of grave yet tender rebuke with which our Lord would speak these words. The practice of divorce had grown very common among the Jews, and although the Samaritans are said to have been more strict, yet it is probable this woman had been divorced more than once. At any rate her conscience was sufficiently instructed to know that she had *now* no right to the honoured name of wife. Surely our Lord here gives us an example of very gentle dealing with one living in sin, tenderness being ever more likely to awake a conscience not desperately hardened than severity.

19. "A Prophet." The first step towards the higher and truer confession she afterwards made, when she said, "Is not this the "Christ?" (29.).

20. "Our fathers" &c. There seems a strange and sudden change of subject here, which has led some to think that the woman wished to turn the conversation away from herself and her former life. But this is most unlikely. If (with Alford) we imagine a short thoughtful pause after the words "Sir, I perceive that Thou art a Prophet," we can easily understand the woman gladly seizing the occasion to seek for guidance on a question which had probably troubled her mind,—the great question between the Jew and the Samaritan.

"This mountain." Mount Gerizim, to which she would probably point, and on which the Samaritans had built a rival temple to that at Jerusalem.

21. "Woman, believe Me," &c. Our Lord decides not the question between Jerusalem and Gerizim, though He might have done so, and practically does so in the next verse; but He seeks now to lead His hearer's thoughts to higher truths. He says not then, 'Believe Me, 'Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship,' but 'Believe Me,

22 Ye worship [m] ye know not what: we know what we worship: for [n] salvation is of the Jews. A.D. 27.

23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in [o] spirit [p] and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him.

24 [q] God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship *Him* in spirit and in truth.

[m] 2 Kings 17. 29.
[n] Isai. 2. 3. Luke 24. 47. Rom. 9. 4, 5.
[o] Phil. 3. 3.
[p] ch. 1. 17.
[q] 2 Cor. 3. 17.

'this local and national religion, which was to prepare mankind for 'a spiritual and catholic worship, is drawing to an end: very soon it 'will be made clear that every place is equally acceptable to God, and 'no one place honoured with His Presence to the shutting out of 'others.'

"Neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem." That is, in neither of these places *only*. And yet how soon was this saying true in the very letter, the temples themselves of the Jews and the Samaritans being destroyed.

22. "Ye worship" &c. Although the Samaritans in our Lord's time worshipped the one true God, yet, as they rejected all the Old Testament except the five books of Moses, and had invented a worship of their own, they plainly had very ignorant and imperfect notions of that which they worshipped. The Jews, on the other hand, had a very full knowledge of God revealed to them in the Scriptures. St. Paul thus writes of them, "To whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the "covenants, and the giving of the Law, and the service of God, and "the promises; whose are the fathers; and of whom as concerning the "flesh Christ came" (Rom. ix. 4, 5.). Observe how our Lord makes Himself as one of His people, when He says, "*We* know"—meaning 'We Jews.' "Salvation" here signifies the whole preparation for, and working out of, the scheme of salvation.

23. "The hour cometh, and now is." A form of expression signifying that the time is very close at hand.

"In spirit and in truth." What is the sense of this most important expression? It is plain it is not aimed, as some carelessly think, against all external worship and outward rites. To condemn these would be opposed "not only to the practice and experience of the Christian "religion in all ages, but also to the express ordinances of the Gospel "itself" (*Joseph Meade.*). The words seem to mean:—1, *Without any outward representation* (such as had been the great snare and sin of both Jews and Samaritans in older times), but with a distinct view of the spirituality of all real worship; and 2, *Without types and shadows* (such as those which had hitherto formed the main part of the Jewish worship), but with a clear view of the truth which such types and shadows prefigured. Thus the saying would point 1. against all gross and carnal worship, which was always a breach of God's plain Commandment; and 2. against the typical worship of the Jew, which, though appointed by God Himself, was now at an end, being fulfilled in Christ. So far as to the application of the words to the time, place, and occasion, of their utterance. The next verse will lead us to wider thoughts concerning them.

24. "God is a Spirit." Rather, 'God is Spirit',—not one among

A.D. 27. 25 The woman saith unto Him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when He
r ver. 29, 39. is come, [r] He will tell us all things.

s Matt. 26. 63, 64. Mark 14. 61, 62. ch. 9. 37. 26 Jesus saith unto her, [s] I that speak unto thee am *He*.

27 And upon this came His disciples, and marvelled that He talked with the woman: yet no man said, What seekest Thou? or, Why talkest Thou with her?

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many spirits, but in His nature and essence *Spirit*. Here Jesus sets forth the great eternal truth from which all true notions of worship must be drawn. Spirit can only be approached in prayer by spirit. Man can only touch God through his spiritual nature. True worship is the "praying always in the spirit" (Eph. vi. 18.). This at once places all outward aids to worship (and outward aids are necessary to man while in the flesh) in their true place. These are not worship. They are things of sense,—of hearing, seeing, doing,—and by such we cannot touch God, who is pure Spirit. These outward aids are steps by which the spirit of man may climb, but there is no worship till the spirit reaches God. Yet we must not speak of climbing, as though God were far away. As Spirit He is everywhere: nay, most nearly and blessedly in the souls of His people. Do we ask for a Jerusalem or a Gerizim—a holy city, or a mount of blessing,—for our worship? Hear what St. Augustine well says on this verse, "The work is all within. And "if perchance thou seekest some high place, some holy place, make thee "a temple for God within. "For the temple of God is holy, which "temple ye are." Wouldest thou pray in a temple? Pray, within "thyself. Only first be thou a temple of God, for in His temple will "He hear him that prayeth."

25. "I know that Messias cometh," &c. The Lord's words of heart-searching power and strange authority have awaked in His hearer's mind a suspicion of the truth. He speaks just as she would expect the Messiah to speak, if He were come. And her words seem to be a sort of timid half-question whether it can really be so; as though the verse ended with a silent 'Canst Thou be He?'

26. "I that speak" &c. With what a rush of thoughts and tumult of feelings must these words have fallen upon the ear of this poor woman! No wonder "she left her waterpot" (28.), for surely she could think of nothing but the wondrous words she had just heard. Compare this revelation of Himself with that which our Lord afterwards made to the man that had been born blind—"It is He that talketh with "thee" (ix. 37.).

27. "Marvelled." Probably for the same reason which caused the woman herself to marvel when first spoken to by Christ (See 9.). We can however hardly help supposing that the disciples would see with astonishment the startling effect of our Lord's last words upon the woman.

"No man said." Out of the customary respect and reverence with which the disciples treated their Divine Master.

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25. "*Messias*." Explained here, as in i. 41, as the same as "Christ", both words signifying—the first in the Jewish and the second in the Greek language—'Anointed' (See on St. Matt. i. 1.).

28 The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, A.D. 27.

29 Come, see a Man, [t] which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ? [t] ver. 25.

30 Then they went out of the city, and came unto Him.

31 In the mean while His disciples prayed Him, saying, Master, eat.

32 But He said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of.

33 Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought Him *ought* to eat?

34 Jesus saith unto them, [u] My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work. [u] Job 23. 12. ch. 6. 38. & 17. 4. & 19. 30.

35 Say not ye, There are yet four months, and *then* cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; [x] for they are white already to harvest. [x] Matt. 9. 37. Luke 10. 2.

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28. "**Left her waterpot.**" She had tasted of the living water, and thirsted no more for that of earth.

29. "**Come, see a Man,**" **&c.** Jesus had shown, by revealing certain facts of her past life, that he *could* tell her all things that ever she did. Her words are, of course, not literally true, but the meaning is plain enough. Like Andrew (See i. 41.), and Philip (See i. 45,) this woman could not find the Messiah without at once seeking to bring others to Him. How truly missionary is the spirit of Christianity!

32. "**I have meat**" **&c.** The word "I" is to be read with force here. This is no rebuke to the disciples for their anxious wish that He should eat of the food which they had brought, but a simple declaration that His whole heart was so full of the scene in which He had just been engaged that He had no desire for earthly food. "They "knew not that they beheld the Good Shepherd rejoicing over the "recovery of the sheep which He had lost" (*Burgon.*).

33. "**Hath any man**" **&c.** "What wonder the woman did not un- "derstand the water? Lo! the disciples do not understand the meat." (*St. Augustin.*).

34. "**My meat**" **&c.** Once before, when Jesus was "an hungred", He said, "Man shall not live by bread alone" (See on St. Matt. iv. 4.). His words, as spoken by the prophet King, were, "Lo, I come to do "Thy will, O God," (Ps. xl. 7, 8. Hebr. x. 9.). This was His food and refreshment. In doing this His bodily wants were forgotten. Observe the work He had been doing was not alone the saving of the one woman. He had been preparing through her to open the door of salvation to many more (See 39, 41.).

35. "**Say not ye,**" **&c.** The words "ye" and "I" in this verse are to be read with force—'*Ye* say one thing, *I* say another.' It was probably the winter after our Lord's first Passover in Jerusalem (See ii. 13.), when this journey to Galilee took place, and the meaning of our Lord's words would be as follows: '*Ye* would say, would ye not?—it

A.D. 27.
y Dan. 12. 3.

36 y And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.

37 And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth.

38 I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.

39 And many of the Samaritans of that city be-

'still wants four months to harvest. Lo, *I* say (but of another harvest, 'which ye see not), the fields are already ripe for the sickle.' Christ was gazing in Spirit upon the harvest of souls now all but ripe for gathering in. He had been sowing the seed in His conversation with the woman; and lo! instead of four months, a few hours brings the in-gathering of the harvest. The whiteness of the ripening corn in the East has often been remarked by travellers.

36. "He that reapeth" &c. That is, in that spiritual harvest of which Christ was speaking, and to labour in which the Apostles were to be sent forth. What are the "wages" the reapers of that harvest will receive? No doubt in part the rejoicing together named at the end of the verse. But also in part the very gathering in of the fruit itself. For what wages so great as saved souls? "What is our hope, or joy, or crown "of rejoicing?" writes St. Paul—"Are not even ye in the presence of "our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?" (1 Thess. ii. 19.).

"That both he that soweth" &c. Christ speaks of Himself as "He "that soweth." He is evermore the Sower, and He promises to the reapers of His harvest that they shall rejoice with Him.

38. "I sent you to reap" &c. The very word 'Apostle' means 'one 'sent forth.' The Apostles were sent forth to reap that which Christ Himself had sown, thus fulfilling the proverb—plainly a common saying at the time—mentioned in the verse before. In the present verse by "Other men" our Lord must surely signify Himself, the expression being quite accounted for by the figure of earthly sowers and earthly reapers which runs all through this passage. To bring in the patriarchs and prophets of the Old Testament here (as many do) is to confuse the sense of the passage; and it has been justly said that, if these were meant by the "Other men", our Lord should have said 'We', not "ye", "are entered into their labours", for otherwise He leaves Himself out of the work altogether. We may observe that, while it was most true that the Apostles were to reap where Christ had sown, yet were they ever to be scattering fresh seed in their Master's Name; and so the work of every Minister of Christ should be one of mingled sowing and reaping (See on St. Matt. xiii. 18.).

39. "Many of the Samaritans" &c. The harvest is already beginning, though this is only the gathering of the first-fruits. The real in-gathering of the Samaritans took place when Philip the Deacon preached in Samaria, and "the people with one accord gave heed unto "those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles "which he did", and "were baptized, both men and women" (Acts viii.

lieved on Him [z] for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did. A.D. 27. [z] ver. 29.

40 So when the Samaritans were come unto Him, they besought Him that He would tarry with them: and He abode there two days.

41 And many more believed because of His own word;

42 and said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for [a] we have heard *Him* ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world. [a] ch. 17. 8. 1 John 4. 14.

43 ¶ Now after two days He departed thence, and went into Galilee. A.D. 28. 32nd Year of our Lord's life.

44 For [b] Jesus Himself testified, that a prophet hath no honour in his own country. [b] Mat. 13. 57. Mark 6. 4 Luke 4. 24.

6, 12.), St. Peter and St. John going thither from Jerusalem to lay their hands on the newly-baptized converts (See Acts viii. 14—17.), we may notice how far more ready these Samaritans of Sychar were to believe and to accept the Messiah than the Jews were (Comp. St. Luke xvii. 15, 16.). As the publicans and harlots were to the rest of the Jews, so were the Gentiles (and the Samaritans were in great part Gentile in origin, See on St. Matt. x. 5.) to the Jews. They had not the same stumbling-blocks of pride and prejudice to surmount. They were more candid and teachable.

41. "Because of His own word." There is no record of any miracle performed by our Lord at Sychar, unless indeed we so call His wonderful knowledge of the woman's past life, which is not a miracle in the common sense of the word. The people believed because of His *word*. Thus were they "more noble" (Acts xvii. 11.) than the Jews of Jerusalem, many of whom "believed in His Name, when they "saw the miracles which He did" (ii. 23.). How blessed was this faith which needed no miracle! It is such a faith that God looks for at our hands. We have not miracles, but we have the same "word", which satisfied the people of Sychar, and which made them the first-fruits of that Catholic Church which Christ came to found, and which, though founded among the Jews, was to gather in its embrace all the nations of the earth.

43—54. The Healing of the Nobleman's Son.

44. "For Jesus Himself testified," &c. It is difficult to see how this can be a reason for our Lord going into Galilee ("His own country"), unless we accept the view (*Alford's*) that Jesus was seeking quiet and retirement, and would best find it where He was least esteemed. It seems however better (with most ancient interpreters) to understand "Galilee" here as if it were '*the rest of* Galilee, passing by Na-'zareth.' So St. John speaks of "Judæa" (iii. 22.) for *the rest of* Judæa, as opposed to Jerusalem. This is made more probable by our Lord's own words at Nazareth, in which He speaks of that place as "His own

A.D. 28. 45 Then when He was come into Galilee, the
c ch. 2. 23. & 3. 2. Galilæans received Him, [c] having seen all the things
d Deut. 16. 16. that He did at Jerusalem at the feast: [d] for they also went unto the feast.

46 So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee,
e ch. 2. 1, 11. [e] where He made the water wine. And there was
2 Or. *courtier*, or, *ruler*. a certain [2] nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum.

47 When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judæa into Galilee, he went unto Him, and besought Him that He would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death.

f 1 Cor. 1. 22. 48 Then said Jesus unto him, [f] Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.

"country", as opposed to other parts of Galilee (See St. Luke iv. 23.). On the present occasion we find our Lord going to Cana (46.), a place North of Nazareth, which He must therefore have avoided. The meaning then would be, that Jesus went into various parts of Galilee, avoiding Nazareth, because He "Himself testified, that a prophet hath "no honour in his own country." This testimony, it is true, was uttered at a later time than the present, when our Lord visited Nazareth (See St. Luke iv. 14—31. and *Note* on verse 3 of this chapter.), and was rejected by His own countrymen; but St. John does not say our Lord spoke these words now: he only mentions this, Christ's testimony at a later time, to account for His now visiting Galilee without going to Nazareth, as we should have expected.

45. **"The Galilæans received Him."** That is, received Him with honour. Yet this reception was not lasting, else those terrible woes would not have been afterwards uttered against the cities of Galilee (See St. Matt. xi. 20—24.). These Galilæans only received our Lord because of those miracles, which had already so impressed many of the Jews (ii. 23.) and Nicodemus among them (iii. 2.). They had not the simple-minded faith of the Samaritans who believed "because of His "own word" (41.).

46. **"A certain nobleman."** In the original language this means 'a certain royal person', that is, probably, one belonging to the court of King Herod. It is a guess which has some likelihood in it that this may have been Chuza, Herod's steward, whose wife Joanna was among the holy women who attended upon our Lord (See St. Luke viii. 3.).

48. **"Except ye see signs" &c.** Christ often answers rather the state of heart from which words proceed than the very words themselves. Probably in the midst of this nobleman's real anxiety for his son there was the secret feeling, 'If He can really cure my son, I will believe in 'Him.' But our Lord's words are not spoken to the nobleman only.

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47 "*Come down*" As the word 'up' is used of going towards a capital city, so 'down' is used for going towards a place on the sea-coast (always of course on the lowest level). Capernaum was on the Sea of Galilee (*See Map.*). Cana was probably among the hills, and so on considerably higher ground than Capernaum (See on St. Luke iv. 31.).

49 The nobleman saith unto Him, Sir, come down ere my child die. A.D. 28.

50 Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way.

51 And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told *him*, saying, Thy son liveth.

52 Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.

They are not 'Except thou seest', but "Except ye see." Thus they take in the Jews standing by. "The Jews require a sign" (1 Cor. i. 22.), and Jesus doubtless contrasts them in His mind with those Samaritans for whom His word was enough (41.). Yet in this answer there is mingled blame and encouragement. The nobleman's faith was weak, but Jesus will not quench the "smoking flax" (St. Matt. xii. 20.). So His words, while blaming the weakness of faith, almost imply that He will not refuse to do the miracle.

49. "Sir, come down" &c. How often do trouble and sorrow teach the first lesson of "effectual fervent prayer." The nobleman is scarcely to be blamed for not seeing that our Lord could as easily raise the dead as heal the sick, for even Martha and Mary failed to see this at a later time (See xi. 21. 32.). Yet he thought of no power which could heal at a distance. His only idea of help was in our Lord's actual presence at his son's bed-side. Compare the faith of the Gentile Centurion of the same city with this nobleman. The one said, "Sir, come down ere my "child die." The other said, "Lord, I am not worthy that Thou should-"est come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant "shall be healed" (St. Matt. viii. 8.).

50. "Go thy way;" &c. "There is here again something to be "learned by a comparison of the Lord's dealing with this man and with "the Centurion of the other Gospels. Here, being entreated to come, "He does not; but sends His healing word. There, being asked to "speak that word of healing, He rather proposes Himself to come. For "here, as Chrysostom well brings out, a narrow and poor faith is en-"larged and deepened; there a strong faith is crowned and rewarded. "By not going He increases this nobleman's faith: by offering to go "He brings out and honours that Centurion's humility. Nor shall we "fail to observe by the difference of His conduct in the two cases how "far was our Lord from being an "accepter of persons." He will not "come but only send, to the son of this nobleman; He is ready to visit "in His own Person the servant of that centurion" (*Abp. Trench.*).

"The man believed" &c. This was the first step towards the fuller belief mentioned afterwards (See 53.). He believed the miracle would take place, but yet He waited for the certainty before his heart was altogether won for Christ.

52. "Yesterday at the seventh hour." It would seem that the distance need not have prevented the nobleman reaching Capernaum the same evening, if the conversation took place at one o'clock in the day (See *Note* on 6.); but if he had travelled to Cana in the morning,

A. D. 28. 53 So the father knew that *it was* at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house.

54 This *is* again the second miracle *that* Jesus did, when He was come out of Judæa into Galilee.

CHAPTER V.

1 *Jesus on the sabbath day cureth him that was diseased eight and thirty years.* 10 *The Jews therefore cavil, and persecute Him for it.* 17 *He answereth for Himself, and reproveth them, shewing by the testimony of His Father,* 32 *of John,* 36 *of His works,* 39 *and of the scriptures, who He is.*

a Lev. 23. 2. Deut. 16. 1. ch. 2. 13. AFTER a this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

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he might well have been unable to reach home that night, as the journey would be one of several hours on foot. Possibly, when once believing that his son would live, he lingered a while with Christ. At any rate he did not reach home till the next day. There is no need to suppose that the servants set out directly the cure took place, or that they had gone far. Probably they did not start to meet their master till the morning.

"The fever left him." It was no *beginning to amend*. He was suddenly well. The fever left him as suddenly as the winds and waves calmed at the Lord's word of power (See on St. Matt. viii. 26.).

53. "Himself believed." "We may hence see that there are degrees "of faith, as of other virtues, which have their beginning, their increase, "and their perfecting. This man's faith had its beginning, when he "asked for healing for his son: its increase, when he believed the "Lord's words, "Thy son liveth": lastly it was perfected, when he "received the servants' news" (*The Venerable Bede, quoted by Trench*).

"His whole house." So it was with Cornelius (Acts x. 24.), and so with Lydia (Acts xvi. 15.), and so with the Philippian gaoler (Acts xvi. 34.). One man's faith brings a blessing to many.

54. "The second miracle." Not the second in this same visit to Galilee, but the second great Galilæan miracle, the first being the turning water into wine, also at Cana (See ii. 1—11.), but on a former visit to Galilee. These two miracles are noteworthy, and perhaps specially selected by St. John, as the instruments of confirming—the former the faith of the disciples (see ii. 11.), and the latter the faith of this hitherto unbelieving household. Jesus does not despise a faith built up, or at least established, upon the evidence of miracles, but He loves better still a faith that needs not such evidence (See on 41.).

CHAPTER V.

The Miracle at the Pool of Bethesda, and Conversation arising therefrom.

1. "A feast of the Jews." It is impossible to say with any certainty what this feast was. Perhaps on the whole it is best to understand it of the Passover, in which case it would be the second Passover

2 Now there is at Jerusalem [b] by the sheep [2] *market* a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches. A.D. 28.

[b] Neh. 3. 1. & 12. 39.

[2] Or, gate.

3 In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water.

4 For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.

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since our Lord's Baptism, the first being that at which He cast out the buyers and sellers from the Temple, as already related by St. John (See ii. 13.), the third that named as the time of the miracle of the Feeding of the Five Thousand (See vi. 4.), and the fourth, of course, that at which our Lord was crucified. His public ministry would, according to this reckoning, last rather more than three years, perhaps three years and a half, since it is plain that at least some months must have passed between our Lord's Baptism and His first Passover.

2. **"Bethesda."** This word means 'House of mercy.' The pool seems to have been within a building, and to have been surrounded by a portico divided into five portions, called here "porches," for the shelter of the sick people who came there. Some have supposed this pool to be the same as that of Siloam (See ix. 7.), partly because there appear to be some traces of an ancient portico in the latter, and partly because the spring which supplies the pool of Siloam is not constant in its flow, but at certain times bubbles up with great force and then sinks again. But there is no sufficient reason to consider these two names as describing the same pool. Indeed the most careful researches would place Bethesda to the North-east of the city, while Siloam is a well-known spot, and lies to the South-east (See Map of Jerusalem, and also Bible Atlas, published by the Christian Knowledge Society, Map xi. Note 5.).

3. **"Impotent."** That is, 'weak and powerless.' "Halt" means 'lame.'

4. **"For an angel" &c.** This verse has from very ancient times afforded to Christian writers a beautiful emblem of the blessing of the waters of Baptism to the healing of the soul by the descent of the Holy Spirit.

"The Church is the true Bethesda, the real 'house of mercy', to "which the diseased and helpless sons of men may resort for health. "*There* is the saving Fountain, which God has opened for sins and "for uncleanness. *There* are the true healing waters;—the sacred wash-"ing of Baptism, and the tears of Repentance, which are effectual for

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4. "*For an angel*" *&c.* This verse, together with the last clause of the verse before, is not found in some of the oldest and best copies of St. John's Gospel, and it is possible that it was originally an explanation written by some one in the margin, to describe what was generally believed concerning the healing merits of the pool. It is marvellous how few words there are in the Bible about the genuineness of which there is any doubt. But it must be allowed that it is doubtful whether St. John wrote this verse.

A.D. 23. 5 And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years.

6 When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time *in that case*, He saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?

7 The impotent man answered Him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me.

c Matt. 9. 6. Mark 2. 11. Luke 5. 24. 8 Jesus saith unto him, c Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.

"the healing of all kinds of spiritual maladies, by virtue of the saving "Blood of Christ, the one great Sacrifice for sin. And the Angel who "descended to trouble the waters, what is he but a type of the Holy "Spirit, who broodeth over the water of Baptism, and opens the foun- "tain of tears in the penitent? And no doubt there are special seasons "of grace, when the Good Spirit secretly pleads with men,—with the "heathen to bring them to Baptism, with backsliding Christians to "lead them to repentance" (*Peter Young.*).

5. "A certain man was there." Jesus chose out one only of all that "great multitude," partly perhaps in compassion for his long sufferings, but chiefly, we can hardly doubt, with a special view to his spiritual state, and the fruit which his healing of body would produce in his soul. For thirty eight years this poor sufferer had patiently waited in hope that God would at last show him mercy. What a lesson that men ought always to hope, and not to faint! And what a rebuke to our restlessness and impatience under little trials! May we not also see in this miracle a pledge that even the hardened sinner need not despair? There is surely healing for the soul, as well as for the body, after many years of infirmity. God be thanked that it is so.

6. "And knew." Certainly by His divine and supernatural knowledge.

"Wilt thou be made whole?" This question seems to be asked in a tone of gentle compassion, to draw the poor sufferer's attention to One both willing and able to help him.

7. "Sir, I have no man," &c. The poor man seems to have for the moment fancied our Lord's words showed a willingness to help him in reaching the water, and to have answered accordingly, perhaps expecting Him to say, 'I will stay and assist thee when the moment comes, Truly he "wist not who it was" (13), or he would have cried, "Lord, "if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me" whole (St. Matt. viii. 2.). "The "most helpless in himself, he was, for that reason, nearest to the help "of Christ" (*Churton.*).

8. "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk." Upon the poor sufferer's utter helplessness, and upon a faith which cannot be supposed to have been more than in its birth, the voice of Omnipotence falls in startling power. As in the healing of the palsied man let down from the roof (See St. Matt. ix. 6.), the command to take up his bed was to give proof of his perfect soundness in the presence of them all.

9 And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and [d] on the same day was the sabbath. A.D. 28. [d] ch. 9. 14.

10 The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath day: [e] it is not lawful for thee to carry *thy* bed. [e] Ex. 20. 10. Neh. 13. 19. Jer. 17. 21, &c. Matt. 12. 2. Mark 2. 24. & 3. 4. Luke 6. 2. & 13. 14.

11 He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk.

12 Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk?

13 And he that was healed wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed Himself away, [2] a multitude being in *that* place. [2] Or, *from the multitude that was.*

14 Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: [f] sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee. [f] Mat. 12. 45. ch. 8. 11.

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10. "It is the sabbath day:" &c. The Jews—that is, the chief persons among them—here, as so often (See on ix. 16.), make the charge of breaking the Sabbath a plea for finding fault with our Lord's acts. It is needless to say that their real motive was not zeal for the Sabbath but hatred of Christ.

11. "He that made me whole," &c. The poor man's faith is already fast growing. He is sure that One who could make him whole could not command any thing wrong. His boldness is like that of the man born blind, who argued so well from the miracle performed upon himself that Jesus was of God (See on ix. 30—33.).

13. "Jesus had conveyed Himself away." The original word here means 'glided away,' and suggests the idea that our Lord rendered Himself invisible, as is more plainly told us in other places (See viii. 59. and St. Luke iv. 30.).

14. "In the temple." Whither he had doubtless gone to offer his thanks to God.

"Sin no more," &c. It seems probable from these words that the healed man had been guilty, either of some great sin in early life, or of some long-indulged sinful habit, which Christ's words would at once bring home to his conscience. It is possible that his long and severe affliction had been the direct consequence of his sin, though we cannot say this with any certainty. Indeed we must not forget the danger of rashly assuming that suffering is the fruit of sin. Against this our Lord plainly warns us (See St. Luke xiii. 2.), though in the present case His words seem to imply that there had been special sin. But what must that be which is a "worse thing" than the thirty-eight years of weary suffering? No torment which could be inflicted in this world, but that which is "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is "not quenched." The awful peril of falling back into sin once repented of is fearfully pictured to us by our Lord in His saying concerning

A.D. 28. 15 The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus, which had made him whole.

16 And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay Him, because He had done these things on the sabbath day.

g ch. 9. 4. & 14. 10. 17 But Jesus answered them, [g] My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.

h ch. 7. 19. 18 Therefore the Jews [h] sought the more to kill Him, because He not only had broken the sabbath,

i ch. 10. 30, 33. Phil. 2. 6. but said also that God was His Father, [i] making Himself equal with God.

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the return of the unclean spirit once gone out of a man (See St. Matt. xii. 43—45.).

15. **"Told the Jews."** Certainly not in order to gain favour with them by a betrayal of his Benefactor, but hoping (we may rather suppose) to win honour for One who had done so great things for him.

16. **"Persecute Jesus, and sought to slay Him."** Observe this as being said of so early a time in our Lord's ministry (See *Note* on iv. 3.). Truly He was "despised and rejected of men."

17. **"My Father worketh"** &c. Jesus reasons that "He is no more "a breaker of the Sabbath than God is, when He upholds with an "energy that knows no pause the work of His creation from hour to "hour and from moment to moment" (*Trench.*). Man needs rest, and his Sabbath must be a day of rest. But God needs no rest, and when it is said He rested on the seventh day, it is only of the work of creating that it is said: for God's love works eternally in upholding and in blessing His creation. Thus when a Sabbath is employed in works of mercy, it is employed most nearly as God employs His rest of ceaseless lovingkindness. So Christ says, 'I am only acting as My Father 'acts in working works of mercy on the Sabbath-day.'

18. **"Making Himself equal with God."** These perverse Jews see what many learned men have refused to see, namely that in calling Himself Son of God, Jesus makes Himself equal with God. They see that He speaks of Himself as Son of God in a real and true sense, far above that lower sense in which we are adopted to be sons of God. The Son is of the same nature as the Father, and that nature, being God, admits of no higher and lower. That which is God, whether the Father which begets, or the Son which is begotten, is the *Highest*, infinitely above all else, infinitely great and glorious and holy. But we must note that this is true of Christ's *Godhead* only. In His *Manhood* He is inferior to God, "Equal to the Father as touching His "Godhead, but inferior to the Father as touching His Manhood" (*Athanasian Creed.*). St. Augustine states this great doctrine most forcibly thus:—"Concerning the Word I repeat what ye already know; "'"The Word was God": here is that which is equal to the Father. "But "The word was made flesh": here is that which is inferior "to the Father. So the Father is both equal and greater: equal to the "Word; greater than the flesh: equal to Him by whom He made us; "greater than He who was made for us. This sound Catholic rule,

19 Then answered Jesus and said unto them, A. D. 28.
Verily, verily, I say unto you, [k]The Son can do [k] ver. 30.
nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father ch. 8. 28. & 9. 4. & 12. 49. & 14. 10.
do: for what things soever He doeth, these also
doeth the Son likewise.

20 For [l]the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth [l] Matt. 3. 17. ch. 3. 35. 2 Pet. 1. 17.
Him all things that Himself doeth: and He will
shew Him greater works than these, that ye may
marvel.

21 For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and

"which ye must know, and hold fast, and never let slip, we should "apply to the things we understand" [that is, such things as are plainly spoken about our Lord]. "And those things which we may not under-"stand, we should keep to be at some future time, when we shall "be able, explained by this rule."

19. "The Son can do nothing of Himself." This does not mean 'The Son is powerless by Himself,' but 'The Son cannot in His very 'nature, and because of His oneness with the Father, act separately 'from the Father.' They are One, and their work is one.

"What He seeth the Father do." The "seeth" here is not spoken of sight as commonly understood, but is a human word used by the Saviour as best shadowing forth that entire unity of nature, by which the mind of the Father was perfectly known to the Son (See on 30. and compare viii. 26—28. xii. 49, 50. xiv. 10.).

"What things soever He doeth," &c. When our Lord says He Himself does the works which the Father does, He does not mean that He does *like* works, in imitation of the Father, nor that He does *some* of the same works; but He means that *all* which the Father does He does also, at the same time and in the same sense and manner. There is no distinction in their work. It is all one. So it is said of the Word, "All things were made by Him, and without Him was not any "thing made that was made" (i. 3.). Yet might this be equally said of the Father.

20. "Sheweth." Answering to the "seeth" above (19.). This showing is not a revealing to the Son of the works *when done*, but a communicating to the Son, through the Oneness of the Godhead, of the eternal will and counsel of the Father. Well does St. Augustine say on this passage, "If there are times when words fail, though the "mind is clear; how much more must words fail, when the subject is "one the mind cannot grasp."

"Greater works than these." That is, greater than these which ye have seen. When it is said that the Father "*will show*" the Son these greater works, it seems as though the words were spoken rather in the sense of an unfolding of these greater works to the world than of an unfolding them to the Son Himself, for the next few verses show that these works were already known to our Lord. Yet we must remember (always applying the rule above given; See on 18.) that some things were hidden from our Lord's human Nature (See on St. Matt. xxiv. 36.).

21. "The Father raiseth up the dead," &c. To 'quicken' is to

A. D. 28.

quickeneth *them;* [m] even so the Son quickeneth whom He will.

22 For the Father judgeth no man, but [n] hath committed all judgment unto the Son:

23 that all *men* should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. [o] He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent Him.

24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, [p] He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me,

[m] Luke 7. 14. & 8. 54. ch. 11. 25, 43.
[n] ver. 27. Mat. 11. 27. & 28. 18. ch. 3. 35. & 17. 2. Acts 17. 31. 1 Pet. 4. 5.
[o] 1 John 2. 23.
[p] ch. 3. 16. 18. & 6. 40, 47. & 8. 51. & 20. 31.

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make alive. Resurrection and Judgment are two things belonging, as all would hold, to the Father. They are powers wielded by God alone. Jesus here claims these powers as His own, thus declaring Himself to be God, and One with the Father. These are the "greater works" which the Father will show in due time. Observe how these two works are not only infinitely "greater" than the miracles already worked by Christ, but absolutely the *greatest* works possible. Nay, we may say that they are "a summary of all Divine working. There is absolutely "no work of God which is not either a producing, sustaining, restoring, "*Quickening;* or a deciding, rejecting, destroying, *Judgment.*" "The "two works correspond to omnipotence and omniscience, perfect power "and perfect knowledge" (*Stier*). This quickening—life-giving—power has to do with both the natural and the spiritual life. In this verse both are included. Afterwards Jesus separates them, speaking of the gift of spiritual life first (in 25.), and then of the gift of natural life (in 28.). When our Lord says "The Son quickeneth *whom He will*," He speaks of His power. He is "the Resurrection and the Life" (See on xi. 25.). But He cannot will except what the Father also wills.

22. "The Father judgeth no man." Just as life-giving power, though belonging to the Father, is committed by Him to the Son, so is also Judgment. The Father does not judge the world in His own Person, but through the Son.

23. "That all men should honour" &c. This is one end and object of the giving of "all power" (St. Matt. xxviii. 18.) to the Son. By Him the Father quickens the dead; by Him the Father judges the world; that all men should see that "in this Trinity none is afore, or "after other: none is greater, or less than another: but the whole "Three Persons are co-eternal together, and co-equal" (*Ath. Creed.*). How greatly does this verse condemn the Socinians or Unitarians, who profess to honour the Father, while they dishonour the Son by denying that He is equal to the Father and true God. No man can truly honour the Father except by giving equal honour to the Son.

24. "Verily, verily," &c. Christ begins to unfold more fully what He has said concerning the power of Resurrection and of Judgment committed to Him. Observe, He does not say 'believeth on Me', but "believeth on Him that sent Me," for to believe on the Son without believing on the Father is as impossible as to honour the Father without honouring the Son. Besides to believe on the Father who sent the Son is to believe that He sent Him—to believe on Him as sending the Son—and so is to believe on both the Father who sent and the Son who

hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; [q] but is passed from death unto life. A.D. 28.
[q] 1 John 3. 14.

25 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when [r] the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.
[r] ver. 28. Eph. 2. 1, 5. & 5. 14. Col. 2. 13.

26 For as the Father hath life in Himself; so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself;
[s] ver. 22. Acts 10. 42. & 17. 31.

27 and [s] hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, [t] because He is the Son of man.
[t] Dan. 7. 13, 14.

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is sent. Such a believer, Christ says, already "hath everlasting life." He has already entered even here upon that life which, when perfected, shall be his for ever. For the spiritual life here is but the first imperfect stage of the eternal life hereafter. This verse is well chosen as the Gospel in the Communion of the Sick.

25. "The dead shall hear" &c. By the "dead" is here meant the spiritually dead,—those "dead in trespasses and sins." Thus this verse is a continuation of the last, which speaks of a resurrection to spiritual life. The quickening power of Christ having been spoken of (See 21.), we here find that power shown forth in the *spiritual* resurrection, as a little farther on (See 28, 29.) it is shown forth in the *bodily* resurrection. By "the voice of the Son of God" we should understand not simply our Lord's own voice and words, but those of His ministers who speak in His Name, and of His Gospels which record His sayings. Christ here calls Himself "Son of God," not, as His custom is, "Son of "Man." This is doubtless in part because He is here speaking of an act of Divine power.

26. "For as the Father hath life" &c. Life in its fullest sense—uncreated Life, Life which can quicken others and make them live,—this belongs in the eternal nature of things to God alone. It belongs also to Christ as God (See on i. 4.). And yet it is true to say that the Son has eternally received this Life from the Father; not as having ever been without it, but inasmuch as the Father is the supreme Fountain of Life. So too Christ says, "I live by the Father" (vi. 57.). This is the same mysterious truth which is taught in the Nicene Creed, in which Christ is said to be "Begotten of His Father before all "worlds."

"And hath given Him authority" &c. As with Life, so with Judgment. This right is so closely bound up with that of creation,—the giving of life carrying with it the right to take account of the life given,—that this too, though shared equally by the Son, yet in its nature flows from the Father, who is the supreme Fountain of right and law and justice and judgment as well as of life (See on 21.). Observe however the very remarkable difference. Christ receives *Life* as Son of *God:* He receives *Judgment* as Son of *Man*. The former power He, as it were, shares with the Father. The latter the Father, as it were, leaves wholly with Him. Why? Because He is Son of Man; that is, that we may not have a Judge who "cannot be touched "with the feeling of our infirmities: but was in all points tempted like "as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. iv. 15.). We shall be judged by Him who is "not ashamed to call" us "brethren" (Heb. ii. 11.).

A.D. 28. 28 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice,

u Isai. 26. 19. 1 Cor. 15. 52. 1 Thes. 4. 16. x Dan. 12. 2. Mat. 25. 32, 33, 46. 29 u and shall come forth; x they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

y ver. 19. 30 y I can of Mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and My judgment is just; because

z Mat. 26. 39. ch. 4. 34: & 6. 38. z I seek not Mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent Me.

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28. "The hour is coming," &c. Compare this verse with 25. That speaks of spiritual resurrection; this of bodily. Therefore our Lord does not say "The hour is coming *and now is*," but only "The hour "is coming," for it was not yet at hand. Nor is it now merely "The "dead shall hear," but "All that are in the graves shall hear."

29. "And shall come forth;" &c. Surely this bodily resurrection is very clearly foretold by the prophet Daniel, when he says, "Many of "them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlast-"ing life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (Dan. xii. 2.). The Resurrection of the good is so much more present to the minds of the writers in the New Testament that when we read such glowing descriptions as that of St. Paul to the Thessalonians (1. iv. 15—17.), we are apt to forget that the wicked shall also rise to judgment. St. Paul however declares this most plainly in his speech before Felix, affirming "that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the "just and unjust" (Acts xxiv. 15.). It hardly needs to be pointed out how all Scripture supposes an intermediate state, between death and judgment, in which the spirit, apart from the body, awaits, either in joyful hope, or in torturing dread, its final sentence of bliss or woe (See on St. Luke xvi. 23.).

30. "I can of Mine own self" &c. This is a repetition of what Christ had already declared (See 19.); only there He spoke with regard to the one act which the Jews found fault with; here He speaks with regard to the mighty power of Resurrection and of Judgment which He has just claimed as belonging to Himself. Christ's meaning is that in the exercise of these great powers He can do nothing apart from, and therefore nothing contrary to, the Father. "His working and His "judgment all spring from his deep unity of will and of being with "the Father" (*Alford.*).

"As I hear, I judge." The hearing in this verse is, like the seeing before (in 19.), not literal actual hearing, but a word imperfectly expressing (as all human language must imperfectly express) the manner in which the Mind of the Father is, through eternal unity of nature, perfectly made known to the Son. By judgment here our Lord seems to mean not only the great eternal Judgment of which He has just spoken, but also every declaration of the Divine will and of Divine truth which He revealed when on earth. "For judgment" was He already "come into this world" (ix. 39.), and many of His sayings, both of approval and of condemnation, were but a forestalling of the final sentence.

"I seek not Mine own will," &c. Christ, as Man, had a separate

31 [a] If I bear witness of Myself, My witness is not true. A.D. 28.

32 [b] There is Another that beareth witness of Me; and I know that the witness which He witnesseth of Me is true.

33 Ye sent unto John, [c] and he bare witness unto the truth.

34 But I receive not testimony from man: but these things I say, that ye might be saved.

35 He was a burning and [d] a shining light: and [e] ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.

36 But [f] I have greater witness than *that* of John: for [g] the works which the Father hath given Me to

[a] See chap. 8. 14. Rev. 3. 14.
[b] Matt. 3. 17. & 17. 5. ch. 8. 18. 1 John 5. 6, 7, 9.
[c] ch. 1. 15, 19, 27, 32.
[d] 2 Pet. 1. 19.
[e] See Matt. 13. 20. & 21. 26. Mark 6. 20.
[f] 1 John 5. 9.
[g] ch. 3. 2. & 10. 25. & 15. 24.

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human will, yet never one contrary to the will of God. This is plainly shown in His prayer in the Garden, "Not My will, but Thine be done" (See on St. Matt. xxvi. 39.). Thus "I seek not Mine own will" means, not 'I seek not to *indulge* Mine own will', but rather, 'I seek not to '*have* a will of My own; I sink and lose My human will in the Divine.'

31. "If I bear witness" &c. Our Lord is passing to a slightly different subject. Having laid claim to so great powers, He desires not to rest His claim on His own word alone, for no one is accepted as a trustworthy witness in favour of himself, but to bring forward other witnesses. Of course if our Lord had no other witness than His own word, that would be as true as if confirmed by a hundred witnesses. What He means is, 'If I bear witness of Myself, My witness is not 'valid,—is not such as will be accepted as true.' This was actually the case, for afterwards when Jesus said, "I am the Light of the world," we read, "The Pharisees therefore said unto Him, Thou bearest record of "Thyself; Thy record is not true" (viii. 13. Compare also our Lord's answer in 14.).

32. "There is Another" &c. This certainly means the Father, as our Lord afterwards more expressly declares in 37.

33, 34. "Ye sent unto John," &c. Our Lord would say, 'Ye have 'a witness too concerning Me, such as ye can well understand, for ye 'yourselves appealed to John, who told you the truth. I do not indeed 'rest My claims on any human witness, for I have higher, but I remind 'you of what John told you, that ye may see that I am only claiming 'to be what he said of Me, and ye once thought much of him.'

35. "He was a burning" &c. Though shining, like the moon, with reflected light, and paling away when brought into the living Light of the Sun of righteousness. The words in the original are, 'He was the 'lantern, set on fire and shining', and St. Augustine refers to the words "I have ordained a lantern for Mine Anointed"—or 'for My Christ'—(Ps. cxxxii. 18.) as prophetic of the Baptist.

36. "The works" &c. Our Lord, having spoken of St. John the Baptist's witness for the sake of His hearers, who had once been willing to listen to him, now turns again to the witness of the Father, and to the ways in which that witness was borne. First it was borne by Christ's own works. These plainly showed to all who were not wilfully blind that the Father had sent Him and was with Him. "The works that

A. D. 28. finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of Me,
h Matt. 3. 17. & 17. 5. ch. 6. 27. & 8. 18. that the Father hath sent Me.
i Deut. 4. 12. ch. 1. 18. 1 Tim. 1. 17. 1 John 4. 12. 37 And the Father Himself, which hath sent Me, [h] hath borne witness of Me. Ye have neither heard His voice at any time, [i] nor seen His shape.
k ver. 46. Isai. 8. 20. & 34. 16. Luke 16. 29. Acts 17. 11. 38 And ye have not His word abiding in you: for whom He hath sent, Him ye believe not.
l Deut. 18. 15, 18. Luke 24. 27. ch. 1. 45. 39 [k] Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and [l] they are they which testify of Me.
m ch. 1. 11. & 3. 19. 40 [m] And ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life.
n ver. 34. 1 Thess. 2. 6. 41 [n] I receive not honour from men.

"I do in My Father's Name, they bear witness of Me", our Lord says on another occasion (x. 25.). By these works Nicodemus was convinced, for "no man", he said, "can do these miracles that Thou doest, except "God be with Him" (iii. 2.).

37. "And the Father Himself," &c. That is, 'Not only through 'My works, but of Himself, and in more direct ways, has the Father 'borne witness to Me.' Our Lord may refer to the Father's Voice heard at His Baptism (—The Transfiguration was after this—), but He also certainly refers to the witness borne by the Father in holy Scripture, for the words "Search the scriptures" (39.) seem closely joined to this verse. The connection seems to be this: 'The Father has Himself 'borne witness of Me. Now you have not seen and heard Him *out-'wardly*—He has not spoken to you face to face: nor again have you 'the *inward* witness of His word abiding in you, as is proved by your 'not believing Me. Yet you *have* His witness in your hands, if you are 'not too blind to see it, for those very Scriptures, in which you think 'you can find eternal life, are full of His witness to Me.' Assuredly, if the Jews could not find Christ in the Scriptures, they could not find "eternal life." If the Scriptures (that is, of course, the Scriptures of the Old Testament) testified of Christ, how mightily does Christ here testify of them!

39. "Search." Our Lord does not say 'Read' but "Search", for the Scriptures are a mine, in which many precious jewels lie far below the surface. It may be named that the word translated "Search" may be quite as correctly translated 'Ye search', and many so understand it.

40. "And ye will not come to Me," &c. The meaning seems to be this: 'You think you will find eternal life in the Scriptures, and yet, 'though those Scriptures testify of Me, you will not come to Me for 'that life, which I alone can give you.' Surely these words may warn us that it is very possible to have an intimate acquaintance with the Bible, its truths and its doctrines, and yet to be personally a stranger to Him whom that Bible everywhere sets forth.

41. "I receive not honour" &c. Before it was "testimony" (34); now it is "honour",—a wider word, which takes in all distinction and exaltation which man can bestow on man. This our Lord neither sought, nor would accept. He sought only the will of His Father; He accepted only that honour which would also honour His Father.

42 But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you. A.D. 28.

43 I am come in My Father's name, and ye receive Me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.

44 [o] How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not [p] the honour that *cometh* from God only?

45 Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: [q] there is *one* that accuseth you, *even* Moses, in whom ye trust.

46 For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me: [r] for he wrote of Me.

47 But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe My words?

[o] ch. 12. 43.
[p] Rom. 2. 29.
[q] Rom. 2. 12.
[r] Gen. 3. 15. & 12. 3. & 18. 18. & 22. 18. & 49. 10. Deut. 18. 15, 18. ch. 1. 45. Acts 26. 22.

CHAPTER VI.

1 *Christ feedeth five thousand men with five loaves and two fishes.* 15 *Thereupon the people would have made Him king.* 16 *But withdrawing Himself, He walked on the sea to His disciples:* 26 *reproveth the people flocking after Him, and all the fleshly hearers of His word:* 32 *declareth Himself to be the bread of life to believers.* 66 *Many disciples depart from Him.* 68 *Peter confesseth Him.* 70 *Judas is a devil.*

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42. "But I know you," &c. Christ sets the Jews in strong contrast with Himself, revealing to them the secret of their want of faith in Him. He knew them by His Divine insight, and saw their hearts empty of the love of God, and full of the love of self. His Heart was full of the love of the Father, and empty of the love of self.

43. "If another shall come" &c. Our Lord doubtless speaks of those "false Christs and false prophets" (St. Matt. xxiv. 24.), who should deceive so many; and perhaps also of the Antichrist who was to come (1 St. John iv. 3.).

44. "How can ye believe," &c. The love of human praise is fatal to a living faith. For the one seeks a visible earthly reward, the other an invisible and heavenly.

45. "Do not think" &c. Christ came not to judge, but to save the world. He would say, 'Do not think I speak in a spirit of anger or of 'vengeance. I have no desire to be your accuser. You have your 'accuser nevertheless, even Moses.'

46. "He wrote of Me." Notably in that prophecy in which he said, "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the "midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto Him ye shall "hearken" (Deut. xviii. 15.). But no less truly in his accounts of the types and ordinances which foreshadowed Christ, such as the passing of the Red Sea, the Brazen Serpent, the Manna, the smitten Rock, the Paschal Lamb.

47. "If ye believe not" &c. The Jews were more likely to believe Moses' writings than Christ's words, partly because the written word would carry more weight with them than the spoken, and partly because

A. D. 29. 33rd Year of our Lord's life.

AFTER these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is *the sea* of Tiberias.

2 And a great multitude followed Him, because they saw His miracles which He did on them that were diseased.

3 And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there He sat with His disciples.

[a] Lev. 23. 5, 7. Deut. 16. 1. ch. 2. 13. & 5. 1.

4 [a] And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh.

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they professed to believe Moses, but did not believe Christ. Those who reject or neglect the light and the evidence God has given them will not be likely to learn new truths or advance to higher knowledge.

CHAPTER VI.

1—13. The Feeding of the Five Thousand.

St. Matt. xiv. 13—21. St. Mark vi. 30—44. St. Luke ix. 10—17.

This (as has been observed on St. Matthew) is the only Miracle related by all four Evangelists. It is therefore one of extreme importance. Nor can we doubt that this importance arises from its bearing on Sacramental doctrine, or, more strictly, from its close connection with the wonderful discourse upon the Bread of Life, which follows in the latter part of this chapter.

1. "*The sea* of Tiberias." Tiberias being a Roman, not a Jewish name, the lake would probably be best known by this name to Gentile readers (See Introduction to this Gospel.). Tiberias was a town on the Western shore of the lake towards its southern end (See Map.).

2. "Followed Him." Christ and His Apostles went in a boat, while the people (as we learn from the other Gospels) went on foot round the head of the lake.

3. "A mountain." Probably a hill, or rising ground, not far from the shore, where He awaited the arrival of the multitudes whom He already saw approaching. He had leisure neither to eat nor to rest. Instead of eating Himself, He fed the hungry: instead of resting Himself, He gave rest to the weary and heavy-laden. How lovely a Pattern of tenderness and unselfishness and self-sacrifice for others!

4. "The passover," &c. The third of our Lord's last four Passovers (See on v. 1.), and thus the close of the second year of His public

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1. "*After these things.*" This is not to be understood as meaning '*Immediately* 'after', but simply at another and a later time. It seems probable that a whole year is passed over between chapters v. and vi. (See on v. 1. and *Note* on iv. 3.). Our Lord was at Jerusalem during the events recorded in chapter v. We now find Him at once in Galilee. It would appear that after the visit to Jerusalem recorded in chapter v. our Lord, hearing of the imprisonment of St. John the Baptist (See St. Matt. iv. 12.), again went into Galilee, where took place the events recorded by St. Matthew up to the end of his chapter xiii. He then, having heard of the death of St. John the Baptist, and longing for retirement in His grief, as well as wishing to take the Apostles, who had just returned from their first short missionary tour, apart into a quiet place for a little time (Compare St. Matt. xiv. 13. with St. Luke ix. 10.), crossed the Sea of Galilee as we read in this place.

5 When Jesus then lifted up *His* eyes, and saw a great company come unto Him, He saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? A. D. 29.

6 And this He said to prove him: for He Himself knew what He would do.

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ministry. Observe that St. John explains for his Gentile readers that the Passover was "a feast of the Jews." But why is it mentioned here at all? It has been thought by many that this verse is put in to account for the number of people assembled at Capernaum and ready to start in large companies for the feast at Jerusalem. It is quite true that the approach of the Passover might account for large numbers of persons gathering in various cities before starting for Jerusalem. But if we consider St. John's object in recording the following miracle, namely to bring in the discourse concerning the "Bread of Life", we may well suppose that his mention of the Passover was to connect that discourse, as well as the miracle out of which it arose, with the great event which took place at the next Passover, just one year afterwards, when so new and bright a light was thrown upon the dark and mysterious words of the present chapter concerning eating and drinking Christ's Flesh and Blood. That this whole chapter is to be read with a reference to the holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper we cannot doubt. In that Sacrament "He who is the true Bread of Life from heaven is ever "distributing Himself to the hungry and weary multitudes who are in "this desert place—the wilderness of this world, and are going up to "the heavenly Jerusalem to celebrate an everlasting festival" (*Wordsworth.*).

5. "He saith unto Philip." We need not understand this as said when our Lord first saw the multitudes. He had been healing and teaching them for some time first, and doubtless during this time the crowd had been increasing. The real meaning seems to be, 'When 'Jesus saw how great a multitude was come, He saith unto Philip'. But the Apostles had, as we gather from St. Matthew, first spoken to Him of the difficulty of finding food, and then He turned to Philip with the question here recorded (See latter part of *Note* on St. Matt. xiv. 15.). Some however suppose that this conversation took place at the very first, as soon as the multitude approached, and that then our Lord left the subject unfinished, and proceeded to His work of healing and teaching, the Apostles at a later hour coming to Him to request Him to send the people away.

6. "To prove him." That is, 'to try him.' Our Lord would try Philip's faith, not to satisfy Himself concerning it, for He knew what was in man, but to show Philip his own short-coming. Philip's answer shows that his faith was as yet but dim; and indeed our Lord had occasion after this to reprove the dimness of Philip's faith, when He

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5. "*Philip.*" Some have ventured to say that our Lord questioned Philip because he would be familiar with the country, since he was of Bethsaida, and this miracle was near Bethsaida. But there were two Bethsaidas, and Philip doubtless belonged to the better known one on the Western shore of the lake near Capernaum, the scene of the miracle being a small village to the North East of the lake (See on St. Luke ix. 10.).

A. D. 29.

7 Philip answered Him, [b] Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.

[b] See Num. 11. 21, 22.

8 One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto Him,

9 There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: [c] but what are they among so many?

[c] 2 Kin. 4. 43.

10 And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.

11 And Jesus took the loaves; and when He had given thanks, He distributed to the disciples, and the

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said, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known "Me, Philip?" (xiv. 9.).

7. **"Two hundred pennyworth" &c.** St. Mark records this answer, though without giving the name of the speaker (See on St. Mark vi. 37.). It is strange to find that same Philip who bore such true witness to Christ when he first saw Him (See i. 45.) now so slow in discerning His power.

9. **"What are they among so many?"** Nothing—to the eye of sense: enough and more than enough—to the eye of faith. Is not a like question sometimes asked by the unbeliever with regard to the simple elements by which the Saviour dispenses to so many His Sacramental blessing? 'What are they—the consecrated bread and wine—'to feed the hungry multitudes?' Christ answers not; but blesses, and breaks, and feeds.

10. **"Make the men sit down."** It must have been at this point that the Apostles began to see what Jesus was about to do. There was no visible preparation for the feast, yet they at once begin to prepare for it, possibly also leading the multitude, as they ranged them in order, to expect some display of miraculous power.

"Much grass." It being the early Spring, for the Passover was nigh (4.).

"The men sat down." It is remarkable that the word here translated "men" means '*men*' in the strict sense, as opposed to women and children, and thus confirms St. Matthew's account, which expressly gives the number as five thousand "besides women and children." Probably the women and children would not be many, women in the East appearing but little in public, and, as on this occasion, sitting apart from the men. Besides, if the multitude was composed in a great measure of those assembled at Capernaum in order to travel together to Jerusalem for the Passover, this would account for the great majority being men, as they alone were obliged to attend the Feasts.

11. **"When He had given thanks."** That this act was a very marked one is plain, for not only is it recorded in all four Gospels, but St. John again refers to it farther on as though it had been a very noticeable feature in the miracle (See 23.). Probably our Lord performed this act of blessing and thanksgiving very solemnly, and after calling the attention of all present to His act. We cannot help remem-

disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would. A. D. 29.

12 When they were filled, He said unto His disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.

13 Therefore they gathered *them* together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten.

14 ¶ Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth [d] that prophet that should come into the world.

[d] Gen. 49. 10. Deut. 18. 15, 18. Matt. 11. 3. ch. 1. 21. & 4. 19, 25. & 7. 40.

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bering that in the institution of the holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper Jesus took the bread and the cup into His Hands and gave thanks, before distributing them to His disciples.

"The disciples to them that were set down." Jesus uses a human ministry. They distribute; yet the gift is not theirs but His. Doubtless Judas Iscariot took part in this wondrous service. So may evil and faithless ministers dispense Christ's gifts now. Yet "neither is the "effect of Christ's ordinance taken away by their wickedness, nor the "grace of God's gifts diminished from such as by faith and rightly do "receive the Sacraments ministered unto them; which be effectual, "because of Christ's institution and promise, although they be minis-"tered by evil men" (Art. xxvi.).

"As much as they would." "Of that multitude we may fitly say, "that in them the promise of the Saviour, "Seek ye first the kingdom ""of God, and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added ""unto you" (St. Matt. vi. 33.), found a practical fulfilment. They "had come taking no thought, for those days at least, of what they "should eat or what they should drink, only anxious to hear the word "of life, only seeking the kingdom of Heaven; and now the meaner "things, according to the word of promise, were added unto them" (*Abp. Trench.*).

12. **"Gather up" &c.** Thus is all waste of His bountiful gifts condemned by the Divine Giver.

13. **"Twelve baskets."** One for each Apostle. These baskets, as the original word implies, were of a large size (but see on St. Matt. xv. 37.), being used for carrying burdens in on the back. There is no need to suppose that the Apostles went to the scene of this miracle provided with these baskets. They might easily have borrowed them from some of the people.

14, 15. The effect of the Miracle.

14. **"This is of a truth" &c.** By "that prophet" the people plainly meant the Prophet of whom Moses spoke as to be raised up among them like unto himself (See on i. 21. and St. Matt. xvi. 14.). No doubt their conviction that Jesus was that Prophet arose from the resemblance of the miracle they had witnessed to the feeding of the Israelites with manna in the desert (See on 31.).

A.D. 29. 15 When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take Him by force, to make Him a king, He departed again into a mountain Himself alone.

16 ¶ And when even was *now* come, His disciples went down unto the sea,

17 and entered into a ship, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them.

18 And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew.

19 So when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs, they see Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship: and they were afraid.

20 But He saith unto them, It is I; be not afraid.

21 Then they willingly received Him into the ship: and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went.

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15. "To make Him a king." When even the Apostles themselves seem to the last to have looked for some temporal greatness in their Messiah (See Acts i. 6.), it is not surprising that the common people thought of a temporal kingdom, and wished to make Him their King. But He received not honour from men. Having sent the disciples away by sea, and dismissed the people, He withdrew into the mountains alone to pray.

16—21. The Walking on the Sea.

St. Matt. xiv. 22—36. St. Mark vi. 45—56.

17. "It was now dark," &c. Our Lord was training His disciples to higher and higher degrees of faith. In a former storm He was with them in the ship, so that they could turn to Him at any moment (See St. Matt. viii. 23—26.). Now He leaves them seemingly in great peril alone. "He will not have them to be clinging only to the sense of His "bodily presence: . . this time He puts them forth into the danger alone, "even as some loving mother-bird thrusts her fledglings from the nest, "that they may find their own wings, and learn to use them" (*Trench.*). Observe Jesus "*constrained*" (St. Mark vi. 45.) the disciples to go in the boat. It was *His* doing, not their own. So when troubles and trials beset Christ's servants, and it is dark around them, they must not think that He has forsaken them, or is far away. Perhaps He has sent His servants into the trouble, as He sent His disciples into the storm, to teach them that, even in the darkest dreadest hour, He is near to save.

21. "Immediately the ship" &c. This seems to be another miracle, not mentioned by the other Evangelists. Is it not thus with many in the voyage of life? They seem to make little progress; they are yet far

22 ¶ The day following, when the people which stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was none other boat there, save that one whereinto His disciples were entered, and that Jesus went not with His disciples into the boat, but *that* His disciples were gone away alone; A. D. 29.

23 (howbeit there came other boats from Tiberias nigh unto the place where they did eat bread, after that the Lord had given thanks:)

24 when the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither His disciples, they also took shipping, and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus.

25 ¶ And when they had found Him on the other side of the sea, they said unto Him, Rabbi, when camest Thou hither?

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from the point they aim at. But if Christ comes and finds them toiling onward, He will do the rest, and take them immediately to the land whither they are going.

22—24. The people follow Jesus to Capernaum.

22. "The day following," &c. It would seem that a considerable number of those who had been sent away the evening before, having probably found shelter for the night in the neighbouring villages, assembled again next morning, hoping to find Jesus. They had seen Him retire into the mountain, and they had seen the disciples set off in the only boat which was there at the time. But He was nowhere to be found.

23. "Howbeit there came" &c. St. John mentions this to account for there being boats there in which the people could cross the lake to Capernaum. The only boat there the evening before was that in which the Apostles had embarked. But during the night, or very early in the morning, some other boats belonging to Tiberias (which was on the West side of the lake, near Capernaum,) had put in near to the scene of the miracle. Some suppose that, being out on the lake, these boats may have taken refuge from the storm, which would prevent their reaching Tiberias; but they may have come over on purpose to bring some of the people back.

24. "Capernaum." Where our Lord chiefly resided, when in Galilee (See on St. Matt. iv. 13.).

25—71. Great Discourse upon the Bread of Life.

25. "Rabbi, when camest Thou hither?" There is no reason to suppose they suspected a miracle, though they felt our Lord's presence at Capernaum to be mysterious. "They little thought that they had "to do with Him of whom it had been written, "Thy way is in the ""sea, and Thy paths in the great waters, and Thy footsteps are not ""known" (Ps. lxxvii. 19.)" (*Burgon*). Observe, the following discourse took place in the synagogue at Capernaum (See 59.).

A.D. 29. 26 Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek Me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.

[2] Or, *Work not.*
[e] ver. 54. ch. 4. 14.
[f] Matt. 3. 17. & 17. 5. Mark 1. 11. & 9. 7. Luke 3. 22. & 9. 35. ch. 1. 33. & 5. 37. & 8. 18. Acts 2. 22. 2 Pet. 1. 17.
[g] 1 John 3. 23.

27 [2] Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but [e] for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: [f] for Him hath God the Father sealed.

28 Then said they unto Him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?

29 Jesus answered and said unto them, [g] This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent.

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26. "Ye seek Me, not" &c. Our Lord, instead of answering their question, lays bare their inmost hearts, showing them how plainly He read their secret motives, and knew the real reason of their desire to follow Him. In the great miracle they had beheld, they had but seen a pledge of earthly plenty and prosperity, and no deeper or truer thoughts of its meaning entered their carnal minds. When they took so low a view of the one miracle, which they had witnessed, they did not deserve to be told of the other, which they had not witnessed.

27. "Labour not" &c. Our Lord now begins to draw out gradually and step by step the great truths and lessons intended by the miracle of the Feeding of the five thousand. He turns this great miracle into a great parable. By the command, "Labour not for the meat that "perisheth", no one would be silly enough to understand our Lord to forbid literally working for our daily bread. St. Paul gives the command "that if any would not work, neither should he eat" (2 Thess. iii. 10.). The real sense is, 'Seek not so anxiously for the meat that 'perisheth'; the words having nearly the same meaning as "Take "no thought for your life what ye shall eat" (St. Matt. vi. 25.).

"That meat which endureth" &c. As with the mention of "living "water" to the Woman of Samaria, so now with the mention of the enduring meat, our Lord would awaken in His hearers a desire for fuller knowledge of His meaning. That meaning He gradually unfolds. At present He explains not this meat, except by saying that it is His own gift.

"Sealed." That is, marked as His own, displaying Him to the world as that beloved Son in whom He is well pleased, and to whom He hath given "all power in heaven and in earth."

28. "What shall we do," &c. The people saw that our Lord spoke of some spiritual blessing, and bade them "labour" to obtain it, and their question is drawn from this word—"labour". It is as though they asked, 'What dost Thou mean by "labour"? What works dost 'Thou bid us do?'

29. "This is the work of God." "The work of God" here, as in the last verse, means, not work done *by* God, but work done *for* God—the work which God requires.

"That ye believe" &c. The people had asked about "works."

30 They said therefore unto Him, [h] What sign shewest Thou then, that we may see, and believe Thee? what dost Thou work? A.D. 29.

31 [i] Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, **He gave them bread from heaven to eat.** Ps. 78. 24.

32 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.

33 For the bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.

[h] Matt. 12. 38. & 16. 1. Mark 8. 11. 1 Cor. 1. 22.

[i] Ex. 16. 15. Num. 11. 7. Neh. 9. 15. 1 Cor. 10. 3.

Jesus tells them but of one work; and that not a work such as they thought of, although containing in itself indeed all works, as the bud contains in itself the flower and fruit. For faith is the root and germ of all holiness. Mark how this answer resembles that of St. Paul to the gaoler at Philippi, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou "shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31.). Belief is one end of the chain, salvation the other. There are other links between. Yet the first link must be grasped before we can touch any other. Doubtless these Jews, who were zealous in works, needed to be drawn away from their trust in legal obedience to a living faith. Some there were who needed to learn that faith without works is dead. So to the rich young man who asked, "What good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal "life?", Christ answered, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the com- "mandments" (St. Matt. xix. 16, 17.).

30. "What sign shewest Thou" &c. This verse must be taken with the next. Christ has claimed faith in Himself as the one great work of God. The Jews are offended at this claim, and demand some sign sufficient to establish it, rejecting the late miracle of the feeding of the five thousand as being a small thing in comparison with the miraculous feeding of the Israelites, numbering more than a hundred times as many, for forty years in the wilderness. They would thus set up Moses as being greater than Christ.

32. "Moses gave you not" &c. Our Lord is here drawing a contrast between Moses and God, the force lying upon the words "Moses" and "My Father." There is also a contrast between the manna and the "true Bread", but it is the Giver rather than the gift which stands out most strongly in this verse. Christ would teach His hearers that even the bread their fathers ate in the desert, which was not the "true Bread", was not given by Moses, but by God Himself. Mark how our Lord, according to His frequent custom, answers not the question asking for a sign, except by leading the questioners to higher thoughts concerning Himself; for what were all miracles and signs to the one great miracle and sign—Christ Himself, "God manifest in "the flesh"? The manna in the desert was but a poor type of Him.

33. "He which cometh." The word "He" is not expressed in the Greek, which would be better translated 'that which cometh.' It seems from the next verse, as well as from our Lord's explanation

A. D. 29. 34 [l]Then said they unto Him, Lord, evermore
l See chap. 4. 15. give us this bread.
35 And Jesus said unto them, [m]I am the bread
m ver. 48, 58. of life: [n]he that cometh to Me shall never hunger;
n ch. 4. 14. & 7. 37. and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst.
o ver. 26, 64. 36 [o]But I said unto you, That ye also have seen Me, and believe not.
p ver. 45. 37 [p]All that the Father giveth Me shall come

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in the verse after, that the Jews did not yet understand that He was speaking of a Person.

34. "Lord, evermore give" &c. This petition reminds us at once of that of the Samaritan woman, "Sir, give me this water" &c. (iv. 15.). The Jews saw that Christ spoke of some great blessing under the figure of the Bread, and, though they probably had even less faith than the woman of Samaria when she asked for the water, yet there is no reason to suppose that they asked in mockery. They possibly thought our Lord was speaking of some miraculous gift He was about to bestow upon them. But may not this request, however ignorant, teach us to make a like request not ignorantly: and, when we know who is the Bread of Life, to pray concerning this spiritual Food, as we do of the bodily, "Give us this day our daily bread"? We may notice that it is the same word in the Greek which is translated "Lord" here, and "Sir" in the request of the woman of Samaria. It is simply a term of respect.

35. "I am the bread of life." Our Lord now first distinctly declares that it is of Himself that He is speaking. He is the Bread of life—the living, and life-giving, Bread. The manna in the desert, no less than the bread with which the five thousand had been fed, was a type of Himself. How marvellous is the truth which thus slowly unfolds itself!

"He that cometh to Me" &c. "Cometh" and "believeth" in this verse are but two parts of the same act,—the coming the outward, the believing the inward. By never hungering and thirsting is signified the complete supply of all their spiritual needs (See on the like promise in iv. 14.). A living faith, bringing us to Christ and uniting us with Him, will find all it wants in Him.

36. "But I said unto you," &c. Our Lord may very possibly refer to some saying not recorded (as in x. 26.); or He may be referring to His saying that though they had not seen the Father, yet whom He had sent (and whom therefore they had seen) Him they believed not (See v. 37, 38.).

37. "All that the Father giveth Me" &c. Christians are here spoken of as one body, for "all that", in this place, does not mean 'all those whom', but 'the whole which'—that is, 'the whole number, 'or body, which the Father giveth.' God gives this number as it were in a mass, as one gift, to the Son; yet each one of the number must come to Him separately to be saved (See farther on 44, 45. and compare xvii. 24.). It is full of instruction and warning to find Judas Iscariot numbered among those whom the Father had given to the Son, and shows that this giving by God, and this coming by man, is no security for final perseverance (See on xvii. 12.).

to Me; and [q] him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out. A.D. 29.

[q] Matt. 24. 24. ch. 10. 28, 29. 2 Tim. 2. 19. 1 John 2. 19.

38 For I came down from heaven, [r] not to do Mine own will, [s] but the will of Him that sent Me.

[r] Matt. 26. 39. ch. 5. 30.

[s] ch. 4. 34.

39 And this is the Father's will which hath sent Me, [t] that of all which He hath given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

[t] ch. 10. 28. & 17. 12. & 18. 9.

40 And this is the will of Him that sent Me, [u] that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

[u] ver. 27, 47, 54. ch. 3. 15, 16. & 4. 14.

41 The Jews then murmured at Him, because He said, I am the bread which came down from heaven.

42 And they said, [x] Is not this Jesus, the Son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that He saith, I came down from heaven?

[x] Matt. 13. 55. Mark 6. 3. Luke 4. 22.

"Him that cometh" &c. This is surely one of the most precious promises in all the Gospel; and should help to teach us that little lesson which it is so blessed to learn,—"Fear not."

38. "For I came" &c. Jesus speaks here as Son of Man (See on v. 18.). He came to carry out the Father's merciful will. That merciful will He declares very fully, saying, "Fear not, little flock, "for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (St. Luke xii. 32.); and again, to Nicodemus, "God so loved the "world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth "in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (iii. 16.). Let us then take care not to speak (as some do) as though the Father were all wrath and the Son all love. The Son is but fulfilling the counsels of the Father's love.

39. "I should lose nothing." God is "not willing that any should "perish" (2 St. Pet. iii. 9.). Nor will any perish, who seek life in the Bread of life.

"Raise it up." The Resurrection is spoken of in this and the next verse, partly lest any should think that Christ was come to destroy bodily death, and partly to show that, although bodily death remained, yet the life which was received from the Bread of life would extend to the whole man, body soul and spirit, giving glory and immortality to all. Here, as so often, the Resurrection is spoken of with regard only to the saved (See on St. Luke xx. 35.).

41. "The Jews then murmured" &c. Nothing could be more startling to the unbelieving Jews than the mighty claims so calmly and simply put forth by our Lord. No wonder they murmured, believing Him, as they did, to be the son of Joseph.

42. "Whose father and mother we know." It seems on all accounts probable that Joseph was dead before the time of our Lord's public ministry. Nazareth however is not very far from Capernaum

A.D. 29. 43 Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves.

y ver. 65. Cant. 1. 4. 44 [y] No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him: and I will raise

z Jer. 31. 34. Micah 4. 2. Heb. 8. 10. & 10. 16. him up at the last day.

45 [z] It is written in the prophets, **And they shall be all taught of God.** [a] Every man therefore

a ver. 37. b ch. 1. 18. & 5. 37. c Matt. 11. 27. Luke 10. 22. ch. 1. 18. & 7. 29. & 8. 19. that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto Me. Isai. 54. 13.

46 [b] Not that any man hath seen the Father, [c] save He which is of God, He hath seen the Father.

d ver. 40. ch. 3. 16. 18, 36. 47 Verily, verily, I say unto you, [d] He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life.

(See *Map.*), and the family of Joseph may very well have been known in this latter place. Besides some of the people now assembled at Capernaum may have come from Nazareth. The words "we know" need not imply personal acquaintance. The people may simply mean that they knew who Jesus' father and mother were.

43. "Murmur not." Our Lord does not correct them as to His true Parentage, for they could not receive the truth. He only begs them not to judge so hastily, but to cease their murmurings, while He goes on to unfold more fully what He had been before saying about those who came to Him, which would itself account for the murmurings and unbelief of His hearers.

44. "No man can come" &c. Must man then wait contentedly, and without any effort, until God draw Him? Surely no. "The "words," says St. Chrysostom, "do not take away our free will, but "show that we greatly need assistance. Christ says not that the un- "willing come, but that he comes who receives much help." St. Paul says, "Work out your own salvation . . . for it is God that worketh "in you" (Phil. ii. 12, 13.). May we not equally say here, 'Come 'to Christ, for it is God who draweth you?'

45. "It is written" &c. The prophet Isaiah says plainly, addressing the future Church of God, "All thy children shall be taught of "God." But alas! among those children how many are there who turn a deaf ear to God's teaching. It is only those who hear and learn of the Father who truly come to the Son for salvation.

46. "Not that any man" &c. This is to correct any false notion the Jews might conceive of the being taught of God. "Beyond the "reach of bodily sense", says St. Augustine, "is this school, in which "the Father is heard, and men are taught to come to the Son. Here "we have not to do with the ear of flesh, but with the ear of the "heart."

"He which is of God," &c. We cannot fail to mark how constantly our Lord asserts His Divine nature and heavenly origin. No one, not being God, could speak as He speaks throughout this great chapter. He alone of men had truly seen the Father, for He was in the beginning with God.

47. "He that believeth" &c. See how faith is again put in the foremost place (as in 29.). If afterwards we find in this discourse great

48 [e] I am that bread of life. A.D. 29.

49 [f] Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead.

50 [g] This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die.

51 I am the living bread [h] which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he

[e] ver. 33, 35.
[f] ver. 31.
[g] ver. 51, 58.
[h] ch. 3. 13.

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blessings spoken of as springing from a sacramental partaking of Christ, let us remember that to such partaking faith is necessary, for (as the 28th Art. says), "the mean whereby the Body of Christ is received "and eaten in the Supper is Faith." What is here stated as to the believer's present possession of everlasting life was stated still more fully and clearly by our Lord on a former occasion (See on v. 24.). The true believer's earthly warfare is rather to hold fast that which has been given to him than to gain that which he has not.

48. "I am that bread of life." By Bread of Life we understand Life-giving Bread. This seems spoken in close connection with the verse before. Christ is the Bread of Life because he that believeth on Him "hath everlasting life."

49. "Your fathers did eat" &c. The people had first brought forward the Manna as being something far more wonderful than the bread with which the five thousand had been fed (See 31.). Our Lord then declared that there was a Bread of Life greater than that Manna, and of which both the Manna and the five loaves in the miracle were but types (See 32.). He now unfolds the matter farther, declaring—1st. that He Himself is that Bread of Life, and 2nd. that to eat of that true Bread would convey a life to the eater which the Manna could not give. The death mentioned in this and the next verse seems to mean bodily death. We must plainly give the same meaning to the word in both verses, and in the former it can hardly mean spiritual death. But this creates a difficulty, for the feeding on Christ, the Bread of Life, does not save from bodily death. No; but it gives a pledge of *Resurrection*. And this appears to be the key to the explanation. The Israelites, who ate the Manna, were dead, and the Manna gave them no pledge of rising again. It was wholly concerned with the present life, and had no power beyond. But the Bread of Life is not for the present life only. It is the pledge of the Resurrection. Those who truly eat of It shall rise again and *in the body* live for ever, as our Lord says still more plainly a little farther on (See 54.).

51. "My flesh." Here is a great and marked advance in the gradual unveiling of the truth by our Lord. The Bread of Life was *Himself*, in the fulness of His twofold nature, as perfect God and perfect Man. Now He begins to limit His saying to *one special part* of Himself,—to a part belonging to His Human Nature only,—even to His Flesh. How startling these words must have been to His hearers! No wonder they asked the question in the next verse.

Mr. Burgon in his Plain Commentary traces out the divisions of this great discourse as follows: "On a review of the entire chapter, "it will perhaps be thought that from ver. 26 to ver. 34 inclusive is "as it were introductory of the subject: that ver. 35 to ver. 50 treats "of the Incarnation of Christ, and of Faith therein as the means of

A. D. 29. shall live for ever: and [i] the bread that I will
[i] Heb. 10. 5, 10. give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

[k] ch. 7. 43. & 9. 16. & 10. 19. 52 The Jews therefore [k] strove among themselves,
[l] ch. 3. 9. saying, [l] How can this Man give us *His* flesh to eat?

53 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily,

"life: while ver. 51 to ver. 58 is a building of the doctrine of the "Holy Eucharist on the doctrine of the Incarnation; the Divine "Speaker in that place advancing a step in His solemn discourse by "the mention for the first time of His *Flesh*. From the lesser acts "of Faith He thus goes on to speak of the highest of all."

"I will give." This promise Christ fulfilled upon the Cross. It was there that He gave His Flesh for the life of the world. Observe how this connects what follows with the Sacrifice of the Cross. It is Christ's Body sacrificed for us which is to be the food of His people. So in the Institution of the Lord's Supper He says, "This is My "Body, which is given for you"—given for you, that is, in the Sacrifice of the Cross. This *giving* of His Flesh by Christ is one link of connection between this discourse and the Sacramental ordinance, being spoken of in both.

52. "How can this Man" &c. How like this question is to that of Nicodemus, when our Lord was speaking of the Sacrament of Baptism, "How can a man be born when he is old?" (iii. 4.).

53. "Verily, verily," &c. As in answer to the question of Nicodemus (See on iii. 5.), so now in answer to the question of the Jews, our Lord *enlarges* His former words, unfolding the mystery still farther, *but not explaining it.* In each case too He enforces His reply with the same solemn "verily, verily," (See on i. 51.).

Observe another step in the discourse. Here first is the "Blood" named with the "Flesh." Who that considers our Lord's words calmly and fairly can doubt that He has in view the holy Sacrament which He was about to institute just a year afterwards? It has been said, 'Christ cannot be speaking of a sacrament not yet ordained.' Can those who speak thus remember of whom they speak? Surely it should be enough to remind them of what is said in the next chapter, when our Lord speaks of the "rivers of living water", and St. John adds, "This spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should "receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus "was not yet glorified" (vii. 39.). If Christ could speak beforehand of one thing, why not of another? Besides, in speaking of His Flesh and Blood, our Lord is certainly speaking beforehand of His Sacrifice on the Cross. They are His Flesh and Blood *as offered and sacrificed* for us. And, if His Death was necessary to the right understanding of the very words "Flesh" and "Blood", it is not strange if the Sacrament instituted before He died was necessary to the right understanding of *eating and drinking* His Flesh and Blood. When all the ancient fathers understand this passage as being spoken concerning the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper; and when our Church so applies it in the exhortation to the assembled Communicants, saying, "Then "we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us" (See 56.); we need not fear to accept this, which is certainly the plainest and most simple meaning.

I say unto you, Except [m] ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you. A.D. 29. [m] Matt. 26. 26, 28.

54 [n] Whoso eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. [n] ver. 27, 40, 63. ch. 4. 14.

55 For My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed.

In saying this we would not deny that there is a purely spiritual way in which our Lord's words may be fulfilled; for our Church teaches that, when the Sacrament may not be had, one who has a lively faith in the death of Christ upon the Cross for him, "earnestly remembering "the benefits he hath thereby, and giving Him hearty thanks therefore, "he doth eat and drink the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ "profitably to his soul's health, although he do not receive the Sa- "crament with his mouth" (*See the Rubric at the end of the Communion of the Sick.*). Only we say that the Sacrament is the *chief* means and way in which our Lord's words in this discourse are to be fulfilled.

"Ye have no life in you." That is, no spiritual life, none of that life which the Bread of Life imparts. What a warning word is this to those who refuse to come to the Lord's Table! It must be a perilous thing to have "no life" in us! "They which by Baptism have laid "the foundation and attained the first beginning of a new life, have "here their nourishment and food prescribed for *continuance of life* "in them. Such as will live the life of God must eat the Flesh and "drink the Blood of the Son of Man: because this is a part of that "diet which if we want we cannot live" (*Hooker.*).

54. "Whoso eateth." The Greek word for "eateth" here, and in the following verses, is a different one from that which has been used up to this point. It means something more than mere eating, being a strong word, implying eagerness of desire for the food eaten. "It "shows the need of coming to Christ in the Holy Communion with "spiritual hunger, and with devout cravings and earnest longings and "yearnings of a famished soul for heavenly food" (*Wordsworth*).

"Hath eternal life;" &c. The blessings promised to eating the Bread of Life before (See 50, 51.) are now promised to the eating and drinking of the Flesh and Blood, for this is the very meaning of eating the Bread of Life (See on 58.). These blessings are eternal life and the resurrection of the body. Mark how the Church speaks in delivering to her people the sacramental gifts:—"The Body of our Lord "Jesus Christ which was given for thee"—or "The Blood of our "Lord Jesus Christ which was shed for thee—preserve thy *body and* "*soul unto everlasting life.*"

55. "My flesh is meat indeed," &c. Surely such words as these —and indeed all the words in the whole of Scripture referring to the Holy Communion—are utterly opposed to the Romish notion of making the Sacrament an object of worship and adoration instead of a means of participation in Christ. It is always as "spiritual food and sus- "tenance" that it is spoken of in God's word.

A.D. 29. 56 He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My
o 1 John 3. 24. & 4. 15, 16. blood, ° dwelleth in Me, and I in him.

57 As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me.

p ver. 49, 50, 51. 58 P This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.

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56. "He that eateth" &c. How marvellous is this oft repeated expression,—left as it is in all its difficulty,—a mystery, which none may fully fathom! How must this "hard saying" (60.) have dwelt in the minds of the Apostles, and been pondered by them, during the year which passed before the next Passover came! And then what light must have broken in upon them! As their Lord took the Bread and said, "Take, eat; this is My Body";—as He took the Cup and said, "Drink ye all of this, for this is My Blood":—they cannot have helped remembering these words at Capernaum. They had heard the scoffers ask, "How can this Man give us His Flesh to eat?" Here surely is an answer. He gives it now—He gives it thus. They do not ask, 'How can this be?' They see—they know—they feel—it is so. Their Lord *does* give them His Flesh and Blood to be their meat and drink. The Bread they break is the Communion—that is, the partaking—of the Body of Christ: the Cup they drink is the Communion—that is, the partaking—of the Blood of Christ (See 1 Cor. x. 16.).

"Dwelleth in Me," &c. How blessed is this close union, and how truly is Christ present with and in those who are thus united to Him! There is indeed no need to say, "Who shall ascend up into heaven? "that is, to bring Christ down from above" (Rom. x. 6.). He is closer to us than the one that kneels next to us at His altar. We could not have a more instructive commentary upon this verse than St. Augustine's:—"This then it is, to eat that meat and drink that "drink; namely to dwell in Christ and to have Christ dwelling in us. "And therefore he who dwelleth not in Christ, and in whom Christ "dwelleth not, without doubt doth neither eat His Flesh nor drink "His Blood: but rather doth unto judgment to himself eat and drink "the Sacrament of so great a thing."

57. "As the living Father" &c. The Son draws His life from the Father. And just as He lives by thus eternally deriving life from the Father, who is the Fountain of life (See on v. 26.), so does he who sacramentally feeds upon Christ live by drawing his spiritual life from Him.

58. "This is that bread" &c. Thus we see that in speaking of His Flesh and Blood our Lord has not been speaking of something different from the Bread of Life which He spoke of before. He has only been explaining it and declaring its fuller meaning (See on 54.); and He ends His most wonderful discourse with the glorious promise which He has uttered before to such as partake of that heavenly Bread (See 51.). "Lord, evermore give us this Bread" (34.).

59 These things said He in the synagogue, as A.D. 29.
He taught in Capernaum.

60 [q] Many therefore of His disciples, when they had heard *this*, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?

[q] ver. 66. Matt. 11. 6.

61 When Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples murmured at it, He said unto them, Doth this offend you?

62 [r] *What* and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where He was before?

[r] Mark 16. 19. ch. 3. 13. Acts 1. 9. Eph. 4. 8.

63 [s] It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh

[s] 2 Cor. 3. 6.

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59. "In the synagogue." Probably therefore this discourse would have a peculiarly solemn character, even though the Jews permitted public questioning and conversation in their synagogue such as would seem to us irreverent.

60. "Who can hear it?" That is, 'Who can listen to it?' 'Who 'can stay and hear it?'

61. "When Jesus knew in Himself." The disciples had not dared openly to express their murmurings. But Jesus, as so often, answers their thoughts and secret whisperings, which were perfectly known to Him.

62. "*What* and if" &c. The meaning of this verse seems to be, 'If My saying as to eating My Flesh offends you, what will you say 'when you see,' (as some of them did see), 'that very Flesh ascending 'up to heaven from whence I came?' Their carnal and literal notions of our Lord's words were a stumbling-block to them then; but they would be a still greater stumbling-block when they saw Him visibly present no more. If it was hard to understand how He could give them His Flesh to eat while He was with them, it would be harder, with their carnal notions, when He was gone away. Thus does He rebuke a low, carnal, literal view of the giving of His Flesh to eat, and raise His disciples to higher thoughts, leading them to see that His doing so must be after some heavenly and spiritual manner. Our Lord twice speaks of His Ascension in this Gospel, though the Evangelist gives no account of it (See xx. 17, and compare the words of our Lord to St. Mary Magdalene there with this passage.).

63. "It is the Spirit" &c. All through our Lord's discourse He had spoken of the gift of life. He now declares that that gift must flow from the Holy Spirit, so that whatsoever He had said concerning the Bread of Life, and concerning His Flesh and Blood, took for granted the presence of the life-giving Spirit. So that those disciples who thought so ignorantly of a mere carnal feeding left out of sight the true source of all life,—that by which the heavenly food could alone convey life.

"The flesh profiteth nothing:" That is, hath no power to convey life. By the "flesh" we should naturally understand the same flesh spoken of in the foregoing discourse,—that is, Christ's own Flesh.

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61. "*Offend.*" See on St. Matt. v. 29. xvii. 27.

A.D. 29. profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life.

t ver. 36. 64 But t there are some of you that believe not.

u ch. 2. 24, 25. & 13. 11. For u Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray Him.

x ver. 44, 45. 65 And He said, Therefore x said I unto you, that no man can come unto Me, except it were given unto him of My Father.

y ver. 60. 66 y From that *time* many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him.

67 Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?

68 Then Simon Peter answered Him, Lord, to

But, as St. Augustine asks, *Does* Christ's Flesh profit nothing? This would seem to contradict the many verses which have told us that His Flesh profiteth much. The sense then must be, 'The flesh—'*apart from the Spirit*—in the way in which ye think of it—the flesh, 'as a mere carnal substance,—this profiteth nothing to the giving 'of life.'

"The words that I speak" &c. Literally this is, 'The words 'which I *spake*', and this, which seems at first of little importance, helps us to the meaning. For our Lord refers to some words which He *had* spoken, not to His words in general. What are these "words" but the "Flesh' and the "Blood", which were causing such perplexity to His disciples? But how does our Lord call these words—the "Flesh" and the "Blood"—"Spirit" and "Life"? Probably because they are, in their true and profitable sense, spiritual and life-giving words, speaking of things which are spiritual and heavenly in their nature, channels of grace and life to the partaker. These are no mere carnal substances, such as the Jews and many of the disciples fancied: they are—for they are filled with, and they impart,—Spirit and Life.

64. "Some of you that believe not." This was among His professing disciples. Among the Apostles there was but one such (See on 70.). It was not the hardness of His sayings, but the hardness of their hearts, which was the real cause of offence.

65. "Therefore said I" &c. Our Lord seems to mean, 'It was 'My knowledge that some would not believe which caused Me to say 'but now that no man can come to Me—that is, as a true believer,—'except God draw him' (See 44.). He would imply that those who believed not lacked that Divine drawing which alone could bring them to Him. Were they then willing to be drawn, and yet God drew them not? No; God drew them not because they were not willing.

66. "Many of His disciples." Not of His true believing disciples, but rather of those who followed Him, joining the company of His disciples, yet not truly His.

68. "Lord, to whom shall we go?" Our Lord's sorrowful and touching question at once draws out from St. Peter one of his noble and clear-sighted confessions. To whom indeed could they go for wisdom and grace and light? They might find some dark places, yet

whom shall we go? Thou hast [z] the words of eternal life. A.D. 29.

69 [a] And we believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

70 Jesus answered them, [b] Have not I chosen you twelve, [c] and one of you is a devil?

71 He spake of Judas Iscariot *the son* of Simon: for he it was that should betray Him, being one of the twelve.

[z] Acts 5. 20.

[a] Matt. 16. 16. Mark 8. 29. Luke 9. 20. ch. 1. 49. & 11. 27.

[b] Luke 6. 13.

[c] ch. 13. 27.

CHAPTER VII.

1 *Jesus reproveth the ambition and boldness of His kinsmen:* 10 *goeth up from Galilee to the feast of tabernacles:* 14 *teacheth in the temple.* 40 *Divers opinions of Him among the people.* 45 *The Pharisees are angry that their officers took Him not, and chide with Nicodemus for taking His part.*

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were they not with Him who was the true Light? If He could not make all mysteries plain to them, could any other do so?

"Thou hast the words" &c. That is, the words Thou speakest are words full of eternal life—life-giving words. In the "words" St. Peter here speaks of would be included those concerning the Flesh and Blood, which our Lord declared to be Life (See on 63.), though it is not to be supposed that the Apostle spoke of those only.

69. "We believe and are sure" &c. This confession is the same as that made by St. Peter in the "coasts of Cæsarea Philippi", when it received so high a mark of favour and approval (See St. Matt. xvi. 16—19.). Observe how Christ there says that the truth was revealed to him by God, which exactly answers to what our Lord has here said about coming to Him being the gift of God (See 65.).

70. "Have not I chosen" &c. This is also a "hard saying." It is a great mystery that Christ, knowing "from the beginning . . . "who should betray Him" (64.), should nevertheless choose Judas to be one of the Twelve. The words are even more mysterious in which Judas is said to be one of those whom the Father had given to Christ (See xvii. 12.). Yet it is not hard to see many truths which could in no way be better taught than by the presence of the traitor among the Apostles. It teaches us that privileges and nearness to Christ cannot save; that there is great spiritual peril in the holiest offices; that calling and election do not ensure salvation; that, in the counsels of God's love, there is even an election of some who are lost. By "a devil" our Lord seems to mean under the power of the evil one, Satanic in his hypocrisy and dark intentions. Not that the darkest of his deeds was as yet conceived. Only he was training himself in Satan's service. We can well imagine with what terrible searchings of heart all the Apostles but one must have heard these fearful words. As at the Paschal Supper a year later, many a conscience must have whispered to itself, "Is it I?" Probably this was needful for the Apostles to keep them humble and watchful.

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70. "*Chosen.*" It should be observed that our Lord uses the same word in a very different sense in xiii. 18

71. "*Iscariot.*" See on St. Matt. x. 4.

A.D. 29. AFTER these things Jesus walked in Galilee:
[a] ch. 5. 16, 18. for He would not walk in Jewry, [a] because the Jews sought to kill Him.

[b] Lev. 23. 34. 2 [b] Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand.

[c] Mat. 12. 46. Mark 3. 31. Acts 1. 14. 3 [c] His brethren therefore said unto Him, Depart hence, and go into Judæa, that Thy disciples also may see the works that Thou doest.

4 For *there is* no man *that* doeth any thing in

CHAPTER VII.

1—13. As to our Lord going up to the Feast of Tabernacles.

1. "He would not walk" &c. It seems not improbable that our Lord had been up to Jerusalem for the Passover (His third—See on v. 1.) immediately after the events recorded in the last chapter, when the Passover "was nigh" (vi. 4.). If so, the enmity which was aroused by the miracle of the healing of the impotent man at the Pool of Bethesda at the Passover before (See v. 1, 16, 18.) doubtless broke out afresh, and is here mentioned as the reason why Jesus would not stay in Jewry (that is, Judæa). How long did these Judæan Jews cherish their malice and hatred against One, whose wisdom and holiness put them to shame! And how differently did He behave to them! He would not afford opportunity to their wicked passions, but withdrew from them, and thus set an example of doing good to those who hated Him.

2. "The Jews' feast of tabernacles." This Feast was kept in the autumn, early in October, in memory of the dwelling of the Israelites in Tabernacles, or Tents, in the wilderness. It was also called the Feast of Ingathering, being kept after the last ingathering of the harvest (See Deut. xvi. 13—17.).

3. "His brethren" &c. By "His brethren" is meant His near relatives, either children of Joseph by a former marriage, or children of the Virgin Mary's sister, the wife of Cleopas, and so cousins of our Lord (See on St. Matt. xiii. 55.). Their request on this occasion seems to arise from a false view of our Lord's mission, and an expectation of earthly greatness, which they were anxious to see Him assume. They could not understand His staying away from the capital Jerusalem, and spending His time among the less important cities and villages of Galilee. By "Thy disciples" in this verse is meant those in Judæa, and especially in Jerusalem, for "many believed in His "name" there (ii. 23.).

4. "For there is no man" &c. Christ's brethren thought that His doing His miracles in so retired a region as Galilee was unaccountable if He desired to obtain that renown and glory which they supposed

1. "*After these things.*" Like other such expressions, this need not refer to the time immediately following the events in the last chapter. Indeed we find that it was six months afterwards, for the time of the last chapter was the Passover (See vi. 4.), whereas the events of this took place at the Feast of Tabernacles (See 2.).

secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. A.D. 29.
If Thou do these things, shew Thyself to the world.

5 For [d] neither did His brethren believe in Him. [d] Mark 3. 21.

6 Then Jesus said unto them, [e] My time is not yet come: but your time is alway ready. [e] ver. 8, 30. ch. 2. 4. & 8. 20.

7 [f] The world cannot hate you; but Me it hateth, [g] because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil. [f] ch. 15. 19. [g] ch. 3. 19.

8 Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up yet unto this feast; [h] for My time is not yet full come. [h] ver. 6. ch. 8. 20.

9 When He had said these words unto them, He abode *still* in Galilee.

10 But when His brethren were gone up, then went He also up unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret.

Him to seek. They scruple not even to reproach Him with a backwardness, or perhaps a cowardice, in not claiming His due.

5. **"For neither did His brethren" &c.** The foregoing verses show this was so, and yet it is a difficult verse. If St. James the Less and St. Jude are of the number of "His brethren," then it is hard to understand how they can be said not to believe in Him. Either "His brethren" must mean *others* of His kinsmen, and not these, or else "believe" must be understood here as meaning 'believe in Him 'as God,' or 'believe in Him so fully as to trust that what He did 'was right.' They may have had faith, but not a true and complete faith. How lonely was Jesus in the world; how little understood, even by those nearest to Him! His servants must not murmur if even those they love do not enter into all their feelings, or sympathize with all their thoughts.

6. **"My time" &c.** By "My time" here is meant 'The time for 'showing Myself to the world.' The expression is like "Mine hour is "not yet come" at the marriage feast in Cana (ii. 4.).

"Your time is alway ready." This may mean, 'You are always 'in a hurry, and cannot bear delay;' or it may mean, 'You can go up 'to Jerusalem, and show yourselves to the world, whenever you like,' for the reason given in the next verse.

7. **"The world cannot hate you."** Mark how "the world", which God made "very good", is constantly used for all that is evil. Man's sin so abounded that the evil in the world soon defaced and outweighed the good. Thus the very name—"the world"—came to stand for that which most prevailed in the world, namely, its evil. By the words "The world cannot hate you", our Lord means 'The world has no 'reason to hate you—can see no ground for hating you.' These "brethren" of our Lord set themselves in no marked opposition to the habits and wishes of the world, and so drew down on themselves no ill-will or enmity (Compare 1 St. John iii. 12, 13.).

10. **"Not openly," &c.** That is, our Lord did not join the great company who travelled up together, as was the custom (See on vi. 4.) to Jerusalem, but went up privately, and so as not to attract attention.

A. D. 29.

11 Then [i] the Jews sought Him at the feast, and said, Where is He?

12 And [k] there was much murmuring among the people concerning Him: for [l] some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay; but He deceiveth the people.

13 Howbeit no man spake openly of Him [m] for fear of the Jews.

14 ¶ Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught.

15 [n] And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this Man [2] letters, having never learned?

16 Jesus answered them, and said, [o] My doctrine is not Mine, but His that sent Me.

17 [p] If any man will do His will, he shall know

i ch. 11. 56.
k ch. 9. 16. & 10. 19.
l ver. 40. Mat. 21. 46. Luke 7. 16. ch. 6. 14.
m ch. 9. 22. & 12. 42. & 19. 38.
n Mat. 13. 54. Mark 6. 2. Luke 4. 22. Acts 2. 7.
2 Or, *learning*.
o ch. 3. 11. & 8. 28. & 12. 49. & 14. 10, 24.
p ch. 8. 43.

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13. "No man spake openly" &c. That is, no one spoke openly in His favour. None had courage to brave the anger of the Pharisees, who had agreed "that if any man did confess that He was Christ, he "should be put out of the synagogue" (ix. 22.).

14—53. Jesus at the Feast of Tabernacles.

14. "About the midst" &c. The Feast lasted eight days (See Neh. viii. 18.). For the first few days our Lord seems to have continued in private. He now startles both friends and foes by his sudden public appearance in the Temple, as One who had a claim to speak God's message to the people.

15. "How knoweth" &c. By "letters" in this place is meant 'learning', which would imply the knowledge of the Scriptures, that being the main province of Jewish learning. By the words "having "never learned" is not meant having been brought up without any education, but, having never been under the instruction of any of the great Rabbis, or Teachers, who were supposed to have the key of the knowledge of the Scriptures. It is plain from this question that Christ showed a wisdom and knowledge in speaking of the Scriptures which astonished His hearers, as His "understanding and answers" had done many years before.

16. "Not Mine, but His that sent Me." That is, not Mine, as though springing from Myself alone, and apart from the Father (See on v. 19, 30.).

17. "If any man will do" &c. In the Greek the word "will" is far more marked than in the English. It is literally, 'If any man *wills*, or '*desires*, to do God's will.' Thus a promise of spiritual knowledge is given to singleness and stedfastness of will. An earnest desire and striving to do what is right will help us to understand much of true doctrine (See 1 Cor. ii. 14, 15.). Who does not know by experience how greatly the truth of Divine doctrines is borne in upon the soul when we are making real efforts after holiness; and, on the other hand, how often doubting and disbelief attend upon careless and sinful living? "Love", says St. Bernard, "is the proper cure for doubt."

of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or *whether* I speak of Myself. A.D. 29.

18 [q] He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but He that seeketh His glory that sent Him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in Him. [q] ch. 5. 41. & 8. 50.

19 [r] Did not Moses give you the law, and *yet* none of you keepeth the law? [s] Why go ye about to kill Me? [r] Ex. 24. 3. Deut. 33. 4. ch. 1. 17. Acts 7. 38. [s] Mat. 12. 14. Mark 3. 6. ch. 5. 16, 18. & 10. 31, 39. & 11. 53.

20 The people answered and said, [t] Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill Thee?

21 Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, and ye all marvel. [t] ch. 8. 48, 52. & 10. 20.

22 [u] Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision; [u] Lev. 12. 3.

"Of Myself." That is, as teaching something different from, and not in accordance with, God's truth,—something having an origin not of God. In reality it was impossible that Christ could speak any thing not of God, since He was One with God.

18. "Seeketh his own glory." It is impossible not to be struck with the absence of self-seeking in our Lord. With utter consciousness of His rights and power, He never asserts these for His own sake. There is an entire absence of display such as no other leader of men ever manifested.

"He that seeketh" &c. These words are not to be understood as a general saying, spoken of any man who seeks God's glory. They are spoken only of our Lord Himself.

19. "Did not Moses" &c. Our Lord in these words seems to be referring to His saying, "If any man will do His will," &c. (17.). It is as though He said, 'Moses taught you God's will, when he gave you 'the law, and yet, though you profess to believe in Moses as sent by 'God, you do not keep the law he gave you. Nay, you break one of 'the plainest of God's commands in seeking to kill Me. How then can 'you know of the doctrine whether it be of God?'

20. "Thou hast a devil:" &c. This charge was brought more than once against our Lord by the unbelieving people, who saw and felt His power. Thus they accused Him of casting out devils by Beelzebub. It is possible that those who spoke did not really know of the designs of the rulers against our Lord's life.

21. "I have done one work." Our Lord is speaking of His healing of the impotent man at Bethesda related in the fifth chapter. This took place about a year and a half before, but our Lord had been little in Jerusalem during this time, and His re-appearance there seems to have roused up the recollection of the old charge brought against Him of breaking the Sabbath. The marvelling spoken of here seems to be marvelling not at the healing itself, but at its being done on the Sabbath.

22. "Moses therefore" &c. Our Lord's argument seems to be as follows: 'Moses gave you the law of circumcision (See Lev. xii. 3.), 'commanding the rite to be performed on the eighth day (not that

A.D. 29. (not because it is of Moses, [x] but of the fathers;)
[x] Gen. 17. 10. and ye on the sabbath day circumcise a man.

23 If a man on the sabbath day receive circum-
[2] Or, *without breaking the law of Moses.* cision, [2] that the law of Moses should not be broken;
[y] ch. 5. 8, 9, 16. are ye angry at Me, because [y] I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath day?

[z] Deut. 1. 16, 17. Prov. 24. 23. ch. 8. 15. James 2. 1. 24 [z] Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.

25 Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this He, whom they seek to kill?

[a] ver. 48. 26 But, lo, He speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto Him. [a] Do the rulers know indeed
[b] Mat. 13. 55. Mark 6. 3. Luke 4. 22. that this is the very Christ?

27 [b] Howbeit we know this Man whence He is:

'circumcision was first ordained by Moses, for it came from Abraham 'himself, and Moses only repeated the old command.). Now in order 'to keep this command you violate the law of the Sabbath, thus allow-'ing by your acts that there may be a higher law to which that of the 'Sabbath should give way. Well then, if you allow that the Sabbath 'may be broken in order to fulfil the law of circumcision, which you 'count of higher importance, why are you angry with Me for setting 'aside the strictness of the Sabbath in making a man "every whit '"whole", and thus obeying the yet higher law of love and mercy?'

23. "Every whit whole." In soul as well as body, as we can hardly help gathering from the history of the miracle (See v. 14.).

24. "Judge not" &c. The meaning is, 'Let not personal feelings 'and prejudices sway your judgment. Be not led away by your love 'of Moses and hatred of Me, but judge honestly and candidly.' This the Jews never did.

25. "Is not this He," &c. This seems a strange thing after the "Who goeth about to kill Thee?" (20.). But we must notice that this is said by "some of them of Jerusalem", who knew the designs of their rulers against our Lord's life, whereas the "people" who asked the question in the former case may have been those gathered from other parts for the Feast, who would not be aware of these wicked designs upon His life.

26. "Do the rulers" &c. The people of the city were surprised that those who were plotting against Christ's life now left Him alone when He seemed in their power. They even began to wonder whether the rulers were themselves convinced that He was the Christ.

27. "Howbeit we know" &c. They thought Him to be simply an inhabitant of Nazareth, and Son of Joseph and Mary. In saying, "But when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence He is", they did not refer to his earthly birthplace, for they knew that Christ was to be born at Bethlehem (See St. Matt. ii. 4—6.). They probably meant that His origin and birth would have something strange and mysterious about them, gathering this from such words as "Who shall declare "His generation?" (Is. liii. 8.). They knew not how great a mystery and miracle His Birth really was.

but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence He is. A. D. 29.

28 Then cried Jesus in the temple as He taught, saying, [c] Ye both know Me, and ye know whence I am: and [d] I am not come of Myself, but He that sent Me [e] is true, [f] whom ye know not.

29 But [g] I know Him: for I am from Him, and He hath sent Me.

30 Then [h] they sought to take Him: but [i] no man laid hands on Him, because His hour was not yet come.

31 And [k] many of the people believed on Him, and said, When Christ cometh, will He do more miracles than these which this *Man* hath done?

32 The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning Him; and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take Him.

33 Then said Jesus unto them, [l] Yet a little while

[c] See chap. 8. 14.
[d] ch. 5. 43. & 8. 42.
[e] ch. 5. 32. & 8. 26. Rom. 3. 4.
[f] ch. 1. 18. & 8. 55.
[g] Mat. 11. 27. ch. 10. 15.
[h] ver. 19. Mark 11. 18. Luke 19. 47. & 20. 19. ch. 8. 37.
[i] ver. 44. ch. 8. 20.
[k] Mat. 12. 23. ch. 3. 2. & 8. 30.
[l] ch. 13. 33. & 16. 16.

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28. "Ye both know Me," &c. These words seem spoken in sorrowful irony (See on St. Mark vii. 9.). The Jews had said that they knew whence Jesus was. He cries to them as it were, 'Ye say ye 'know Me, and whence I am, and yet I come from One whom ye know 'not!' He really implies that they did *not* know Him nor whence He was (See viii. 19.).

"I am not come of Myself," &c. That is, not as you suppose,—not as a mere man might come, whose birth and parentage might be known to all.

"He that sent Me is true," &c. This means, 'He that sent Me 'truly exists, though ye know Him not.' Thus Christ tells the people whence He is, though, instead of believing, they only become more enraged against Him.

30. "His hour was not yet come." Therefore God withheld His enemies from their deadly purpose, for He "stilleth the raging of the "sea ... and the madness of the people" (Ps. lxv. 7.). The same thing is said again in the next chapter (See viii. 20.).

31. "Many of the people" &c. The common people among the Jews were fickle and easily led, as we see by their joyful welcome of Jesus on Palm-Sunday, and their angry demand for His Crucifixion on Good Friday. It is partly this changeableness, and partly the fact that they were very much divided, some holding with Christ and some with the Pharisees, which causes the differences we meet with in various places as to their feeling towards our Lord. Here many of them believe: a little before they rejected His claims (See 27.).

32. "The Pharisees and the chief priests." Probably assembled in their high council, or Sanhedrin (See on St. Matt. xxvi. 3.).

33. "Yet a little while." Namely about six months, the Feast of Tabernacles being in the autumn, and the Passover, at which Feast our Lord suffered, in the spring.

A.D. 29. am I with you, and *then* I go unto Him that sent me.

m Hos. 5. 6. ch. 8. 21. & 13. 33. 34 Ye [m] shall seek Me, and shall not find *Me:* and where I am, *thither* ye cannot come.

35 Then said the Jews among themselves, Whither will He go, that we shall not find Him? will He

n Isai. 11. 12. James 1. 1. 1 Pet. 1. 1. go unto [n] the dispersed among the [2] Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles?

2 Or, *Greeks.* 36 What *manner of* saying is this that He said, Ye shall seek Me, and shall not find *Me:* and where I am, *thither* ye cannot come?

c Lev. 23. 36. 37 [c] In the last day, that great *day* of the feast,

p Isai. 55. 1. ch. 6. 35. Rev. 22. 17. Jesus stood and cried, saying, [p] If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink.

"I go." This surely expresses our Lord's own free will in dying. As He says in another place, "I lay down my life, that I might take "it again. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself" (x. 17, 18.).

34. "Ye shall seek Me," &c. When Christ returned to His Father, the day of mercy and grace for the Jewish people was over. They had no longer the priceless privilege of His Presence among them. He was gone and they could find Him and hold intercourse with Him no more. How well had it been for them if they had even then redeemed the time, and turned to profit that "little while" which was left!

35. "Will He go," &c. The Jews were so earthly in all their notions that they fancied our Lord was speaking of some long journey, and they asked in scorn and ridicule whether He would go to the Jews settled in distant lands, and there "teach the Gentiles," whom they despised. Yet this was just what the Apostles afterwards did, and indeed their question had its truth, though not as they meant it: for, now that the Jewish nation is in blindness, Christ is, in His Spirit and in His Word and in His Church, teaching the Gentiles, and gathering them to Himself. When their "fulness" shall have "come in," then shall the blindness be taken away from Israel (See Rom. xi. 25.).

37. "In the last day," &c. The Feast of Tabernacles lasted eight days, and the last day was a specially solemn one. On each of the other days of the Feast it was the custom for the priests to bring water in a golden vessel with great pomp from the Pool of Siloam to the Temple, where it was solemnly offered to God and poured out upon the altar, during which ceremony the proper Psalms (cxiii.—cxviii.) were sung (See on St. Matt. xxi. 9. and xxvi. 17.). On the eighth day the ceremony of the bringing of the water did not take place, the Psalms only being sung. It was probably at the time when on the other days the water was brought (by some supposed to be in remembrance of the water which flowed from the rock, as the "tabernacles" were of the tents in the wilderness), that our Lord stood forth and proclaimed Himself the true Fountain of living Water—the true Rock, which that in the wilderness foreshadowed (See on viii. 12.).

"If any man thirst." We are at once reminded of the Prophet's

38 [q]He that believeth on Me, as the scripture hath said, [r]out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. A.D. 29.

39 ([s]But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet *given;* because that Jesus was not yet [t]glorified.)

40 Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is [u]the Prophet.

41 Others said, [x]This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come [y]out of Galilee?

[q] Deut. 18. 15. [r] Prov. 18. 4. Isai. 12. 3. & 44. 3. ch. 4. 14. [s] Isai. 44. 3. Joel 2. 28. ch. 16. 7. Acts 2. 17, 33, 38. [t] ch. 12. 16. & 16. 7. [u] Deut. 18. 15, 18. ch. 1. 21. & 6. 14.

[x] ch. 4. 42. & 6. 69. [y] ver. 52. ch. 1. 46.

words, "Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters" (Is. lv. 1.). It is ever the law of God's best gifts, that they should be desired in order to be had. The waters are only for the thirsting. Blessed thirst for which so rich a supply is waiting!

38. "As the scripture hath said." This does not refer to any one particular passage, but to all those passages which speak of the refreshing streams of God's Good Spirit (Such as Is. xxx. 25; xxxv. 6, 7; lv. 1; Ezek. xlvii. 1—9; Zech. xiv. 8.).

"Out of his belly." That is, from his inner man—from his heart. This passage is best understood by comparing it with our Lord's words to the Woman of Samaria (See on iv. 14.).

39. "This spake He" &c. St. John explains our Lord's words, showing us that, as before Jesus spoke to Nicodemus of Baptism (in iii.), and in the synagogue of Capernaum of the Lord's Supper (in vi.), so here He speaks of that which could as yet be understood only in part. We must not forget that the Holy Spirit was the Strength and Comforter of God's people even under the old covenant, and was bestowed by our Lord in a very marked manner while He was yet on earth (See xx. 22.); but nevertheless such a full and abundant stream of grace as is here spoken of could only receive its fulfilment after the mightier Gift of Pentecost. By "should receive" is meant 'were about to receive,' that is, at Pentecost. The above words will show that when St. John says, "The Holy Ghost was not "yet given," he means, 'not yet given in His fulness of grace and power.'

"Not yet glorified." The Psalmist teaches us that when Christ ascended up on high He received (and gave) gifts unto men, and that the chief of those gifts was that the Lord God (doubtless God the Holy Ghost) should dwell among them (Comp. Ps. lxviii. 18. with Eph. iv. 7, 8.).

40. "When they heard this saying," &c. Doubtless there was something peculiarly solemn and impressive in our Lord's words and manner. By "the Prophet" is meant that Prophet of whom Moses prophesied (See on i. 21.), which it is plain by the next words some at least did not understand to be Christ.

41. "Shall Christ come out of Galilee?" "The same difficulty "had once occurred to the simple-minded, truth-loving Nathanael,— "'Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" (i. 46.)—but when in- "vited to "come and see" and judge for himself, he went, and was "convinced. So these objectors might have found a way out of their

A.D. 29.

42 [z] Hath not the scripture said, That Christ
[z] Ps. 132. 11. Jer. 23. 5. Mic. 5. 2. Matt. 2. 5. Luke 2. 4. cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town
of Bethlehem, [a] where David was?

[a] 1 Sam. 16. 1, 4. 43 So [b] there was a division among the people because of Him.

[b] ver. 12. ch. 9. 16. & 10. 19. 44 And [c] some of them would have taken Him;
but no man laid hands on Him.

[c] ver. 30. 45 Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought Him?

[d] Matt. 7. 29. 46 The officers answered, [d] Never man spake like this Man.

47 Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived?

[e] ch. 12. 42. Acts 6. 7. 1 Cor. 1. 20, 26. & 2. 8. 48 [e] Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on Him?

49 But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed.

[f] ch. 3. 2. 50 Nicodemus saith unto them, ([f] he that came
[2] Gr. *to him.* [2] to Jesus by night, being one of them,)

"difficulty, if they had desired it" (*P. Young.*). They were quite right in what they said in the next verse, as to Christ's lineage and birthplace, but they cared not to enquire whether it were not true of Jesus.

45. "**To the Chief Priests and Pharisees.**" Probably again assembled in their high Council, and awaiting the bringing of the Prisoner whom they so eagerly longed to get into their power.

46. "**Never man spake**" &c. These soldiers were overawed by the majesty and power of Christ's words. They dared not to lay hands on Him. And now they return, and themselves preach Christ to their unbelieving masters, declaring openly the effect of His words upon themselves.

48. "**Have any of the rulers**" &c. Though they thus spoke, and perhaps thus thought, yet it was not true that none of the Rulers or Pharisees had believed. We learn shortly afterwards that *many* of these believed, though secretly for fear of the rest (See xii. 42.); and already we know that they had one secret believer among them, namely Nicodemus, while possibly Jairus was of their number, and Joseph of Arimathæa.

49. "**This people**" &c. They meant, 'These common people'—'these low ignorant soldiers'—"are cursed" in their folly and sinfulness. How little thought they where the folly and sin really lay!

50. "**Nicodemus.**" This timid disciple has already made some advance in boldness (See on iii. 1.), and here openly pleads on our Lord's side. It seems probable that he not only was actuated by a feeling of justice in claiming for Jesus a fair hearing, but also was in hope that His presence might impress and convince some of the Council, as it had already made such an impression on the soldiers.

51 [g] Doth our law judge *any* man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth? A.D. 29.

52 They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for [h] out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.

53 And every man went unto his own house.

[g] Deut. 1. 17. & 17. 8, &c. & 19. 15.

[h] ver. 41. Is. 9. 1, 2. Matt. 4. 15. ch. 1. 46.

CHAPTER VIII.

1 *Christ delivereth the woman taken in adultery.* 12 *He preacheth Himself the light of the world, and justifieth His doctrine:* 33 *answereth the Jews that boasted of Abraham,* 59 *and conveyeth Himself from their cruelty.*

JESUS went unto the mount of Olives.

2 And early in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the people came unto Him; and He sat down, and taught them.

3 And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto

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52. "**Art Thou also of Galilee?**" This is asked in scoffing, and means 'Dost thou too join the Galilæans?'

"**Out of Galilee ariseth**" &c. That is, probably, 'No prophet is 'prophesied of as to come out of Galilee.' It was untrue as a fact that no prophet *had* arisen out of Galilee, since Elijah was a Galilæan, as well as Hosea, Jonah, and Nahum.

53. "**Every man went**" &c. That is, the Council broke up without coming to any decision concerning Christ, the words of Nicodemus causing them to dispute among themselves.

CHAPTER VIII.

1—11. The Woman taken in adultery.

1. "**Jesus went**" &c. Doubtless, according to His usual custom, to pray. This verse should not be separated from the last verse of the preceding chapter, to which it seems to be set in contrast. While others went to their homes, Jesus went out into the Mount to pray. It should always be remembered that the division into chapters and verses is made only for the convenience of reference, and that the different Books of the Bible were written without any such breaks or divisions at all.

3. "**The scribes and Pharisees brought**" &c. This was from no righteous hatred of sin, but solely with a view to entangle Jesus in His talk, by obliging Him to do one of two things:—either 1. to pronounce a judgment against the woman, which would be thought hard

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1. It is right to state that the passage beginning with the last verse of chapter vii. and ending with the 11th verse of this chapter is not found in the best ancient copies of St. John's Gospel, and is believed by many to have been inserted here from some other early record. Even if this could be certainly proved, it would by no means prove that it is not a true record of what really took place, nor that it should not be accepted as a portion of the Canonical Scriptures inspired by the Holy Ghost. In certain old copies of the Gospels (though not in those of chief authority) this narrative is found at the end of St. Luke xxi. instead of in the present place.

A.D. 29. Him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst,

4 They say unto Him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act.

[a] Lev. 20. 10. Deut. 22. 22. 5 [a] Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest Thou?

6 This they said, tempting Him, that they might have to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down, and with *His* finger wrote on the ground, *as though He heard them not.*

7 So when they continued asking Him, He lifted

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and cruel by a people who had grown very lax in regard to the sin charged against her, and rob Christ of His character for mercy: and which judgment would also set our Lord in opposition to the Roman government, which did not allow the power of death to the Jews:— or 2. to contradict the Law of Moses, and seem to make light of a great sin, which would be used against Him to damage His character with the people.

5. **"What sayest Thou?"** It is possible these men may have known how our Lord spake with authority, giving His own higher and more spiritual meaning to the Laws which the Jews only understood in the letter (See on St. Matt. v. 22.). Moses had commanded that the adulteress should be put to death (See Lev. xx. 10.). They would know whether Christ enforced or disregarded this law.

6. **"Jesus stooped down," &c.** It should be noticed that the words in Italics—"*as though He heard them not*"—are no part of the original account. When we find words thus printed in our Bibles we are to understand that they are not found in the original language, but are put in by the translators to make the sense plainer in the English version. In the present case they most truly describe our Lord's action as it must have appeared to the by-standers. He *seemed* not to be attending to them. But why this stooping down and writing on the ground with His Finger? Perhaps as a silent rebuke to these eager accusers, breaking in, as they did, upon His holy teaching with their noisy shameless story. These wretched men came with the sinful woman, using her and her shame for their own wicked ends, in order to gain a victory over Christ, and giving no thought of pity or mercy to her. Jesus would give them time to remember themselves and to think of her. Perhaps also He would teach them a lesson of modesty, and show them that, instead of their bold bearing and accusation, they should rather hide their very heads for shame in speaking of so shameful a sin. Moreover He would never take upon Himself the office of a judge (See 15, xii. 47. and St. Luke xii. 14.), and by His conduct proved how unwelcome their appeal to Him was. It is quite vain to enquire what words, if any, our Lord wrote upon the ground.

7. **"He lifted up Himself," &c.** These bold bad men are in no wise abashed by our Lord's unwillingness to listen to their immodest charge. Thinking He hears not, they continue asking for a reply. And then He gives it them, suddenly, startlingly, like a thunder-clap.

up Himself, and said unto them, [b] He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. A.D. 29.

[b] Deut. 17. 7. Rom. 2. 1.

8 And again He stooped down, and wrote on the ground.

9 And they which heard *it*, [c] being convicted by *their own* conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, *even* unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

[c] Rom. 2. 22.

10 When Jesus had lifted up Himself, and saw none but the woman, He said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?

11 She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, [d] Neither do I condemn thee: go, and [e] sin no more.

[d] Luke 9. 56. & 12. 14. ch. 3. 17.

[e] ch. 5. 14.

As in so many other of His replies, He does not indeed answer the question asked, but suddenly turns the matter straight upon the conscience of the enquirer. The Law, which ordered death by stoning, ordered also that the first stone should be cast by the principal witness. Christ uses this with Divine wisdom to unveil the sin of the accusers to their own hearts, saying, "He that is without sin among you"—that is, without sin of like sort with the woman's,—he that is free from all stain of impurity—"let him first cast a stone at her." Then, after shooting this one piercing shaft at their breasts, He again bent down, writing on the ground, as before.

9. "They which heard it," &c. That is, the accusers. The shaft had struck home. The Word of God, "sharper than any two-edged "sword," had pierced "even to the dividing asunder of soul and "spirit", and was "a discerner of the thoughts and intents of their "hearts" (Hebr. iv. 12.). Jesus refused to judge the woman; but He had judged her wicked accusers, or rather He had made them judge themselves. They were hypocrites, and He had torn away the mask from them. They saw how He read them through and through, and they dared not stay. They knew not but that He, who could thus unveil them to themselves, might, in His scorn and wrath, unveil them to the people; and they "went out one by one."

"And the woman standing in the midst." There remained alone those two—"the miserable and the Merciful" (St. Augustine), the unclean and the All-holy, the sinner and the Saviour, face to face. It is not necessary to suppose that the disciples, or the people who were present before, left the Temple. It was the accusers and those who came in with them who all went out, leaving our Lord and the woman standing in the midst. We may well imagine how she would tremble before One who had so sternly dealt with her accusers, thinking that now she should hear like stern words addressed to herself. We may believe too that conscience was at work within her, and that the seeds of a true penitence were already striking their roots into her heart.

11. "Neither do I condemn thee." This does not mean, 'Neither 'do I condemn thy sin', but, 'Neither do I pronounce judgment upon 'thee.' No one can dream that Christ thought lightly of a sin con-

A.D. 29. 12 ¶ Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying,
f ch. 1. 4, 5, 9. & 3. 19. & 9. 5. & 12. 35, 36, 46. f I am the Light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.
g ch. 5. 31. 13 The Pharisees therefore said unto Him, g Thou bearest record of Thyself; Thy record is not true.

stantly and most severely condemned in holy Scripture. But He came to save, and not to judge. And, doubtless seeing in the woman's heart the beginning of a true repentance, He let her go in peace that, like another sinful woman, having been forgiven much she might love much (See on St. Luke vii. 37, 47.).

12—59. Our Lord's Conversations in the Temple at the Feast of Tabernacles.

12. "I am the Light of the world." We learn from verse 20. that our Lord uttered these words "in the treasury", that is, in that part of the Temple in which the treasury was placed. It is not certainly known where this was, but if, as has been supposed, it was in the "Court of the women" (See on St. Mark xii. 41.), then it would be in the very place where stood two enormous lamps on tall pedestals, approached by steps, the lighting of which lamps after the evening sacrifice formed one of the ceremonies of the Feast of Tabernacles. It is supposed that this ceremony was observed in memory of the Pillar of Fire which led the Israelites in the wilderness, as the pouring out of water on the altar was of the smitten rock (See on vii. 37.). Thus our Lord probably founded His sayings upon these two ceremonies, drawing the minds of His hearers from the outward rites, or from the historical truths hidden under them, to the living Water of the Holy Spirit, and to Himself the Light of the world. In Him truly were all the types and shadows of the olden Law fulfilled.

Upon this sublime saying, "I am the Light of the world", we would rather ponder in adoration than speculate in words which can never unfold its depth and richness of meaning. Those who feel in themselves the darkness of ignorance and the darkness of sin, will hail this Light with the thankful joy with which some benighted wanderer would hail the rising of the morning light.

It is impossible not to be struck with the marvellous self-assertion of our Lord in this, as in other sayings. In the mouth of any mere human teacher, however wise and great, how presumptuous would such a saying sound! Yet how simple and natural is it in the mouth of the Son of God! It would be impossible to reconcile such words as these with Christ's humility and lowliness of heart except on the ground that He who spake them was God as well as Man. It is the conscious acceptance of this great truth by the Church that makes such sayings as "I am the "Light of the world" seem to us so perfectly natural and unassuming.

When in primitive times converts were baptized, which was usually in the early morning, they first, turning to the West whither the night was passing away, renounced the works of darkness, and then turning to the East, where the sun was rising, confessed Christ, the Sun of righteousness and the Light of the world. It is from this primitive practice that the custom of turning to the East in saying the Creed arose.

13. "Thou bearest record" &c. A person's testimony concerning

14 Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of Myself, *yet* My record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but [h] ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go.

15 [i] Ye judge after the flesh; [k] I judge no man.

16 And yet if I judge, My judgment is true: for [l] I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent Me.

17 [m] It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true.

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[h] See ch. 7. 28. & 9. 29.
[i] ch. 7. 24.
[k] ch. 3. 17. & 12. 47. & 18. 36.
[l] ver. 29. ch. 16. 32.
[m] Deut. 17. 6. & 19. 15. Mat. 18. 16. 2 Cor. 13. 1. Heb. 10. 28.

himself is seldom accepted as sufficient. It may, of course, be perfectly true, as our Lord's was, but it does not carry with it proof and conviction to others, at least not to the unwilling (See on v. 31.). Yet how blind were these cavillers! It is as though the Sun had spoken to them and said, 'I am the Sun', but they had answered, 'No, we cannot believe 'thee, for thou bearest witness of thyself: thou mayest be the night'.

14. **"Though I bear record" &c.** This seems at first sight to contradict our Lord's former saying, "If I bear witness of Myself, My "witness is not true" (v. 31.), but the word "true" is used in different senses in the two passages. Here it is used in its simple ordinary sense. In the former passage it is used for 'valid',—such as would be accepted as true by others.

"For I know" &c. This is the reason why Christ's record must be true, whether received of men or no. He knew in Himself that He came from God and should return to God, and therefore it was simply impossible that He should speak any thing except God's own eternal truth. This, though hidden from the Jews, was perfectly clear to Him, and He spoke what He knew and saw with the Father.

15. **"Ye judge after the flesh."** That is, carnally, as man judges. Their judgment was a carnal judgment in both senses:—outwardly, as founded only on the outside appearance; inwardly, as springing from a carnal self-willed mind.

"I judge no man." Not as yet. The time for judgment was not yet come. Jesus contrasts His own gentle loving dealings with sinners with the obstinate, narrow-minded, and uncharitable judgments of His hearers. They in their blindness and pride condemned the Innocent. He in His perfect knowledge and perfect love refused to condemn the guilty (See on 26. and iii. 17.).

16. **"If I judge."** There was a sense in which even then Christ could say, "For judgment am I come into this world" (See on ix. 39.). So far as His sayings in themselves judged men, that judgment was true. Also if He willed to pronounce a yet more direct judgment, as He did upon the Scribes and Pharisees when He denounced "Woe" to them for their sins, that judgment was true (See on 21.). For whatsoever He spoke He spoke not apart from, or in contradiction to, the Father, but as One with Him (See on v. 19, 30.).

17. **"The testimony of two men" &c.** Our Lord at first claims perfect truth for His single record of Himself, as He had indeed all right to claim it, being infinitely above all rules and laws made for the security of human evidence (See 14.). But now He in His humility condescends to His hearers, who refused His witness of Himself, saying, as it were, 'If you *must* apply to Me the law concerning

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18 I am one that bear witness of Myself, and
n ch. 5. 37. n the Father that sent Me beareth witness of Me.
19 Then said they unto Him, Where is Thy
o ver. 55. ch. 16. 3. Father? Jesus answered, o Ye neither know Me, nor
p ch. 14. 7. My Father: p if ye had known Me, ye should have known My Father also.
q Mark 12. 41. 20 These words spake Jesus in q the treasury, as
r ch. 7. 30. He taught in the temple: and r no man laid hands
s ch. 7. 8. on Him; for s His hour was not yet come.
21 Then said Jesus again unto them, I go My
t ch. 7. 34. & 13. 33. way, and t ye shall seek Me, and u shall die in your
u ver. 24. sins: whither I go, ye cannot come.
22 Then said the Jews, Will He kill Himself? because He saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come.

'human evidence,—if you *will* judge My testimony as you would that 'of any erring man,—if you say you must have two witnesses to con- 'firm the truth of My words,—then must My Father and I be the 'two witnesses.' The witness of the Father was borne both by His voice from heaven, and yet more by the miracles which were wrought by Christ in the Father's Name and power (See on v. 36, 37. xiv. 10.).

19. "Where is Thy Father?" This question is plainly asked in scorn and disbelief. Not that we are to suppose the Jews to be speaking of an earthly father, for our Lord had so often spoken of His Father in heaven that they could not well mistake His meaning. It is rather as if they said, 'Thou speakest of Thy Father bearing witness. Where '*is* He to bear witness? Let us hear His testimony.'

"If ye had known Me," &c. We must carefully compare this answer to the scornful unbelieving Jews with our Lord's answer to the anxious enquiring disciple, who said, "Lord, shew us the Father." Here the Jews cannot know the Father, because they refuse to know the Son. There the disciples, by learning to know the Son, learnt to know the Father also (See on xiv. 7—9.). It must also be carefully noted how strongly this passage proves the unity of the Father and the Son. "It cannot properly be said of any one that in knowing him "you know another, unless they both are one" (*Is. Williams.*).

20. "In the treasury." This seems to have been in the "Court "of the women", and was the place where offerings were made for the Temple worship (See on 12, and St. Mark xii. 41.). Again we are told that the hands of Christ's enemies were held back by Divine power (See vii. 30.). How many ingenious reasons would man have invented for this, had not the one true and all-prevailing reason been revealed to us!

21. "Again." Because He had said the same thing before (See vii. 33, 34.). The terrible words "Ye shall die in your sins" were not spoken on the former occasion. This is an instance in which our Lord judges, and His judgment is true (See on 16.). He explains His meaning below (See 24.).

22. "Will He kill Himself?" &c. Before (See vii. 35.) the Jews

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20. "*The treasury.*" See Bible Atlas, published by the Christian Knowledge Society, *Note* on the Temple of Herod.

23 And He said unto them, [x] Ye are from be- A.D. 29.
neath; I am from above: [y] ye are of this world; I am not of this world.

[x] ch. 3. 31.
[y] ch. 15. 19. & 17. 16.

24 [z] I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: [a] for if ye believe not that I am *He*, ye shall die in your sins.

[z] 1 John 4. 5. ver. 21.
[a] Mark 16. 16.

25 Then said they unto Him, Who art Thou? And Jesus saith unto them, Even *the same* that I said unto you from the beginning.

26 I have many things to say and to judge of

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had thought, or pretended to think, that He was going into some distant land; now they invent another meaning for His words equally false.

23. **"Ye are from beneath;" &c.** As "from above" means 'from 'the highest heaven', so "from beneath" seems most naturally to mean 'from the lowest depth', 'from the very darkness of hell.' The sense then would be the same as that of the words spoken a little later, "Ye are of your father the devil" (44.). Still the words may mean only, 'Ye are from this lower world.'

"Ye are of this world;" &c. This second part of the verse seems to speak not so much of the origin as of the character of Christ and of His enemies; or perhaps rather embraces both. They, earthly in origin, and having in them nothing from above, were earthly in spirit and in mind. He, coming down from heaven (though in His Human Nature taking our flesh and not abhorring the Virgin's womb), was heavenly in all His thoughts and affections. It was this their earthliness that accounted for their earthly thought of self-destruction as explaining our Lord's words.

24. **"If ye believe not that I am *He*," &c.** It should be noticed that the word "*He*" is here (and in verse 28.) printed in Italics, and is therefore not expressed in the Greek (See on 6.); so that the literal translation is, 'If ye believe not that I AM'; and we can hardly doubt that this would recall to His hearers the title by which God revealed Himself to Moses (See Ex. iii. 14.), and perhaps lead them to think that He was Himself claiming that title. Yet He does not actually do this, and His hearers are in evident uncertainty as to His meaning by their following question, "Who art Thou?"

25. **"Even the same that I said," &c.** This sentence would be more exactly translated, 'First of all, that which I speak unto you,' the word translated "said" being more properly 'speak.' The sense is not, 'That which I have declared Myself to be', but 'That which 'My words and teaching have shown Me to be.' It is as though Christ said, 'You might, had you pleased, have answered your own question 'from all My teaching.' He was the Word of God, and revealed God to man, and this might have answered the question "Who art Thou?", if the questioners had not been too blind to see.

26. **"I have many things" &c.** This verse seems to mean, 'I 'have many things which I might lay to your charge, such as your 'blindness in not seeing who I am, but the time of judgment is not 'yet (See on 15.). Meanwhile My work and office is to speak to the 'world, whether they accept My words or not, the eternal truths which 'the Father sent Me to speak' (See on v. 19, 20.).

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you: but [b] He that sent Me is true; and [c] I speak to the world those things which I have heard of Him.

[b] ch. 7. 28.
[c] ch. 3. 32. & 15. 15.

27 They understood not that He spake to them of the Father.

28 Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have [d] lifted up the Son of man, [e] then shall ye know that I am *He*, and [f] *that* I do nothing of Myself; but [g] as My Father hath taught Me, I speak these things.

[d] ch. 3. 14. & 12. 32.
[e] Rom. 1. 4.
[f] ch. 5. 19, 30.
[g] ch. 3. 11.

29 And [h] He that sent Me is with Me: [i] the Father hath not left Me alone; [k] for I do always those things that please Him.

[h] ch. 14. 10, 11.
[i] ver. 16.
[k] ch. 4. 34. & 5. 30. & 6. 38.

30 As He spake these words, [l] many believed on Him.

[l] ch. 7. 31. & 10. 42. & 11. 45.

31 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on Him, If ye continue in My word, *then* are ye My disciples indeed;

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27. "**They understood not**" &c. Strange wilful blindness after our Lord's plain words concerning the Father which sent Him (18.)! Truly He will have "many things to judge" of them,—much ignorance, obstinacy, and hardness of heart,—when He comes to judge.

28. "**Then shall ye know**" &c. This, though spoken to the Jews, was true of only some of them. Yet we may believe that the word "then" stretches forth into all the future, and also that our Lord is speaking through these Jews to all men. When He was crucified, then the world began to learn who He was, and whence He came. One by one God's elect are being continually brought to the knowledge of a crucified Saviour. In that crucified One they learn to see the great "I am" (See on 24.), the eternal Word, who is with God, and who is God (i. 1. For the latter part of this verse see on v. 19, 20.).

29. "**He that sent Me is with Me:**" &c. This verse is to be taken with the last, as a part of that which men should know concerning Christ. As the Word is ever "with God" the Father, so is the Father ever with the Word, for They are "of one substance, power, "and eternity" (Art. i.).

"**I do always**" &c. This is the sign and proof of the unity spoken of. The Son does "those things that please" the Father, because He wills whatsoever the Father wills. He cannot, being one with the Father, act contrary to the Father's good pleasure (See on v. 19.).

30. "**Many believed on Him.**" Convinced, we may well believe, by the wisdom and power with which He spake. Yet this belief seems from our Lord's words in the next verse to have been rather a conviction of the understanding than any thing deeper.

31. "**If ye continue in My word,**" &c. Our Lord had already had disciples who "went back and walked no more with Him" (vi. 66.), and He here warns these new converts, possibly ready enough in their profession of being His disciples, that to be His disciples indeed

32 and ye shall know the truth, and [m] the truth shall make you free. A.D. 29.

33 They answered Him, [n] We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest Thou, Ye shall be made free?

34 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, [o] Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.

35 And [p] the servant abideth not in the house for ever: *but* the Son abideth ever.

[m] Rom. 6. 14, 18, 22. & 8. 2. Jam. 1. 25. & 2. 12.

[n] ver. 39. Lev. 25. 42. Matt. 3. 9.

[o] Rom. 6. 16, 20. 2 Pet. 2. 19.

[p] Gal. 4. 30.

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they must persevere to the end,—they must continue in that state in which His word is their life and food and guiding light. Those who abide in Christ's word are "they which in an honest and good heart "having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience" (St. Luke viii. 15.). To abide in Christ's word is to allow that word to abide in us.

32. "Ye shall know the truth," &c. Know it, that is, with a deep inner blessed knowledge. But what is the truth? Pilate asked this in vain. We shall not ask in vain, if we ask God Himself to teach us, for the truth is not a mere creed received by the head, but a hidden treasure stored in the heart. Nay, is not the truth Christ Himself? For He said, "I am the Way, the *Truth*, and the Life" (xiv. 6.). By "free" is here meant free from the slavery of sin (See 34.).

33. "We be Abraham's seed, &c. The Jews understood our Lord's words in a carnal literal sense. Yet their boast is most astonishing; for not only had the Israelites been in bondage in Egypt and in Babylon, but at that very time they were under the dominion of the Romans. National pride was the besetting sin of the Jews, and it here led them into a vain and foolish lie. We should think of our Lord as addressing a large number of hearers, so that we need not suppose this conversation to be held with the new converts mentioned above (See 30, 31.), though they doubtless formed a part of the hearers.

34. "Whosoever committeth sin" &c. This is not simply, 'Whosoever sinneth,' but a stronger expression, meaning, 'Whosoever makes 'sin his practice.' We are at once reminded of many similar passages, which speaks of the bondage of sin (See Rom. vi. 16—23. 2 St. Pet. ii. 19.).

35. "The servant abideth not" &c. This is a difficult passage. The meaning may be drawn out as follows: 'Whosoever makes sin 'his practice is a slave of sin. Now a slave does not of necessity con-'tinue a slave in the house in which he serves for ever: he may be 'set free, and leave the house of his slavery. A son is different. He 'continues always a member of the house and family in which he is 'a son. Therefore' (to pass on to the next verse) 'if I—the Son—'set you free, bringing you out of your house of bondage into the glo-'rious liberty of the children of God, ye shall be free indeed, because, 'inasmuch as I remain a Son in the House of God for ever, ye too shall 'for ever be children of God through faith in Me.' This is not the sense usually given to the passage. Most commentators understand by

A. D. 29.

36 [q] If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

[q] Rom. 8. 2. Gal. 5. 1.

37 I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but [r] ye seek to kill Me, because My word hath no place in you.

[r] ver. 40. ch. 7. 19.

38 [s] I speak that which I have seen with My Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father.

[s] ch. 3. 32. & 5. 19, 20. & 14. 10, 24.

39 They answered and said unto Him, [t] Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, [u] If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.

[t] ver. 33. Matt. 3. 9.

[u] Rom. 2. 28. & 9. 7. Gal. 3. 7, 29.

"the house" the house or family of God, and not, as above, simply the house in which the slave or the son happens respectively to be. Thus they interpret as follows:—Having in the last verse spoken of the servant (or slave) of sin, our Lord passes on in this to the thought that he who is a slave of sin is also a slave in God's household, having no knowledge of God as his Father and no childlike love to God. Thus he is as the Ishmael in the true family of Abraham, and if he is not brought by the Son out of the state of a slave into that of an adopted child, he will be cast out, having no abiding place in the household. The former seems perhaps the simpler interpretation, but the difference is of little importance practically.

36. "Ye shall be free indeed." The meaning, as well as the blessedness, of this freedom is the same whether the state of bondage escaped from is described as bondage in the house of sin and Satan, or bondage in the household of God. He that is delivered from the tyranny of sin is also delivered from the slavery of the law, and serves God not in the "spirit of bondage" but in the "spirit of adoption" (Rom. viii. 15.).

37. "Abraham's seed." That is, according to the flesh. Our Lord quite admits that the Jews had spoken truly in their boast as to their descent from Abraham (See 33.), but He goes on to show them how little worthy they were of this privilege, and how little right they had to count themselves as of the spiritual seed of Abraham, inasmuch as they walked not in the steps of Abraham's faith (See Rom. iv. 12. Gal. iii. 7.). They, boasting themselves to be the seed of Abraham, sought to kill Him who was in a yet higher sense *the* Seed,—that true Son of Abraham in whom the great promise was fulfilled (See Gal. iii. 16.).

38. "Ye do that which" &c. The first part of this verse has been explained before (See on v. 19, 20.). The second part is spoken to arouse in the hearers a true sense of their conduct. They of course could not understand the words at first, because, when Jesus spoke of their father, they would naturally think of Abraham, and yet they could not help suspecting that He had some other deeper meaning, as indeed He had, and as He tells them plainly afterwards (See 44.). Thus they go on to repeat their boast of being Abraham's children.

39. "If ye were Abraham's children," &c. Christ at once shows them that this at any rate was not His meaning. They might be Abraham's seed after the flesh, but, "Neither, because they are the seed

40 [x]But now ye seek to kill Me, a Man that hath told you the truth, [y]which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. A.D. 29. [x] ver. 37. [y] ver. 26.

41 Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to Him, We be not born of fornication; [z]we have one Father, *even* God. [z] Isai. 63. 16. & 64. 8. Mal. 1. 6.

42 Jesus said unto them, [a]If God were your Father, ye would love Me: [b]for I proceeded forth and came from God; [c]neither came I of Myself, but He sent Me. [a] 1 John 5. 1. [b] ch. 16. 27. & 17. 8, 25. [c] ch. 5. 43. & 7. 28, 29.

43 [d]Why do ye not understand My speech? *even* because ye cannot hear My word. [d] ch. 7. 17.

"of Abraham, are they all children" (Rom. ix. 7.), for "they which "are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham" (Gal. iii. 7.).

40. "A Man that hath told you the truth." It was simply this which was the reason of their hatred. Jesus was too stern a denouncer of sin to be loved by sinners.

"This did not Abraham." That is, 'Such conduct as this is very 'different from that of Abraham. So you have no right to boast that 'you are his children.'

41. "The deeds of your father." Again, as before (See 38.), our Lord is leading His hearers on to consider *whose* children they were proving themselves by their bitter enmity to Him.

"We be not born of fornication." The Jews now see that Jesus is not speaking of any earthly father, such as Abraham. It is of a spiritual relationship He is speaking. So they change their answer. Their meaning is, 'We are true children of the One true Father, not, 'like the idolatrous heathen, worshipping false gods, and looking up 'to them as fathers.' In this, as when before they had said they were "never in bondage to any man" (33.), they had little cause to boast, for, though indeed idolatry had been unknown among the Jews since the Captivity, that is for more than five hundred years, yet it had been one of the crying sins of their forefathers (See Hos. ii. 4.).

42. "If God were your Father," &c. That is, if they bore any likeness to God, as children to their father, then they would love Him—God's dear Son. The Father loveth the Son,—He had borne witness, "This is My beloved Son,"—and yet they who boasted to be God's children hated Him! Before, we saw those who boasted to be Abraham's seed seeking to kill the true Seed (See on 37.); now we see those who boasted to be God's sons hating the true Son of God.

43. "Why do ye not understand" &c. Perhaps our Lord here suggests more than the words at first seem to say. His mode of talking was strange to them because it was the language of God and of heaven, and not their *mother-tongue*, as we say. He might have answered this question, 'Even because ye are not children of God'; but He gives another reason, "Even because ye cannot hear My word," that is, 'Because ye have hardened your hearts against My doctrine till ye 'cannot now receive it.' This is what is called 'judicial blindness', that is, blindness coming as a judgment upon obstinate resistance of light and grace.

A.D. 29. 44 [e] Ye are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts
[e] Matt. 13. 38. 1 John 3. 8.
of your father ye will do. He was a murderer
[f] Jude 6.
from the beginning, and [f] abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

45 And because I tell *you* the truth, ye believe Me not.

46 Which of you convinceth Me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe Me?

[g] ch. 10. 26, 27. 1 John 4. 6.
47 [g] He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear *them* not, because ye are not of God.

48 Then answered the Jews, and said unto Him,

[h] ver. 52. ch. 7. 20. & 10. 20.
Say we not well that Thou art a Samaritan, and [h] hast a devil?

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44. "**Ye are of your father the devil.**" Jesus now speaks His meaning plainly. Oh terrible words! And yet most needful to be heard, that all may know whose children they make themselves when they wilfully sin. By "**Ye will do**" is meant 'Ye *will* or *desire* to 'do', it being the same form of expression as in vii. 17.

"**A murderer.**" As seeking the ruin of man and destroying souls, as well as by prompting every murder from Cain's downwards. The Jews proved themselves his children by their plots to murder Jesus, and by their rejection of the truth.

"**Abode not in the truth.**" He is a spirit who hates and flees from the light of truth (though once possessing that light before his fall), and who will not suffer any portion of that light of truth to be in him.

"**He speaketh of his own:**" &c. Lying is one of the peculiar sins of the devil, being one of those sins in which we not only yield to his temptation, but also copy his example, and make ourselves like him. He is called the father of lies because he was the inventor of lying, having seduced our first parents by the lie, "Ye shall not surely "die" (Gen. iii. 4.). And is he not a liar every hour, falsely saying in the sinner's ear, 'God is not so strict as men say', 'The pleasure of this 'sin is worth the risk', 'There will be time enough for repentance', and the like?

45. "**Because I tell you**" &c. Being children of the devil, the father of lies, these Jews could not love or accept the truth. Falsehood was dearer to them than truth.

46. "**Which of you convinceth**" &c. That is, 'Which of you can 'convict Me of any sin? Is not My life a witness to My words? If 'you cannot find a fault in My conduct, can you think Me capable 'of deceiving by My words?'

47. "**He that is of God**" &c. The words "of God" here mean 'born of God', or 'a child of God': and this verse is the summing up of the whole argument, pronouncing a terrible judgment, though not yet a *final* sentence, upon His unbelieving hearers (See on 16. and 21.).

48. "**Say we not well**" &c. The two things which the Jews here

49 Jesus answered, I have not a devil; but I honour My Father, and ye do dishonour Me. A.D. 29.

50 And [i] I seek not Mine own glory: there is One that seeketh and judgeth. [i] ch. 5. 41. & 7. 18.

51 Verily, verily, I say unto you, [k] If a man keep My saying, He shall never see death. [k] ch. 5. 24. & 11. 26.

52 Then said the Jews unto Him, Now we know that Thou hast a devil. [l] Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and Thou sayest, If a man keep My saying, he shall never taste of death. [l] Zech. 1. 5. Heb. 11. 13.

53 Art Thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest Thou Thyself?

54 Jesus answered, [m] If I honour Myself, My honour is nothing: [n] it is My Father that honoureth Me; of whom ye say, that He is your God: [m] ch. 5. 31. [n] ch. 5. 41. & 16. 14. & 17. 1. Acts 3. 13.

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say about our Lord may possibly be said in answer to the two things He has said about them; as though it were, 'Thou sayest we are no 'true children of Abraham; we say Thou art a Samaritan: Thou sayest 'we are no true children of God; we say Thou hast a devil.' 'Sama-'ritan' was a term of far deeper reproach than 'Galilæan.' It implied a perverter of God's Law and a promoter of a false worship (See on St. Matt. x. 5.). It may have been that our Lord's visit to Sychar and intercourse with the hated Samaritans (as related in iv.) may have led the Jews to call Him a Samaritan. They did not suppose Him to be a Samaritan by birth.

49. "I have not a devil;" &c. Observe the calm simplicity of this answer. Jesus simply denies the graver charge (the lighter one of being a Samaritan He does not care to deny), and then takes His hearers once again back to the great truth they had so often heard with deaf ears—that truth which was the key to all His words and actions—"I honour My Father."

50. "There is One that seeketh and judgeth." That is, God the Father, who sought His Son's glory, and judged between Him and those who dishonoured Him. The judging here spoken of is plainly not that final judgment of which it is written, "The Father judgeth no man" (v. 22.), but that discerning between the right and the wrong, the true and the false, which is a part of God's omniscience, for "the eyes of "the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good" (Prov. xv. 3.).

51. "He shall never see death." That is, 'He shall never die.' Christ speaks of the death of the soul, for to Him the death of the body is a little thing and not worthy to be accounted as death. The Jews naturally (for "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit "of God", 1 Cor. ii. 14.), mistook our Lord's meaning, and supposed Him to speak of temporal death.

54. "If I honour Myself," &c. This saying is like that which our Lord had spoken before concerning bearing witness of Himself (See

A.D. 29. 55 yet [o] ye have not known Him; but I know
[o] ch. 7. 28, 29. Him: and if I should say, I know Him not, I shall
be a liar like unto you: but I know Him, and
keep His saying.
[p] Luke 10. 24. 56 Your father Abraham [p] rejoiced to see My
[q] Heb. 11. 13. day: [q] and he saw *it*, and was glad.

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on v. 31.). He is answering the question, "Whom makest Thou Thy-"self?", and His meaning is, 'If I say that which I am, and thus glorify 'Myself, I should gain no acceptance. Ye would only reject My testi-'mony concerning Myself. Therefore I appeal to My Father, who 'honoureth Me, in that all My mighty works are done in His Name 'and in His power.' "So also Christ glorified not Himself to be made "an High-Priest: but He that said unto Him, Thou art My Son; to-"day have I begotten Thee" (Heb. v. 5.).

55. "If I should say," &c. For Christ to say He knew not God the Father would be as false as for the unbelieving Jews to say they knew Him. Yet how different, both in nature and in degree, was Christ's knowledge of the Father from that which could be gained by any mere man. Christ knew Him through His perfect and eternal union with Him as God: man can only know Him as He is revealed and manifested in the Son. Christ Himself declares that no man knoweth the Father, "save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son "will reveal Him" (St. Mat. xi. 27.).

56. "Your father Abraham" &c. "Christ shows that they were "strangers to the race of Abraham if they were grieved at what he "rejoiced in" (*St. Chrysostom.*). By the "day" of Christ is here meant the time of His first Advent or coming in the flesh,—not alone the actual day of His Birth, nor the actual day of His Crucifixion, but the whole of His earthly life. In like manner the "Year of the Lord" is used, not for one particular year, but for the time of His manifestation to the world (See on St. Luke iv. 19.). "When that (our Lord's "first Advent) was over, and the attention was directed to another and "future appearance, the word—the "Day" of the Lord—came to be "used of His *second* coming" (*Alford.*). But *when* did Abraham rejoice to see the day of Christ's coming? No doubt he rejoiced in faith and hope when on earth, seeing the promise afar off. It is with this his rejoicing in faith and hope while on earth that our Lord would contrast the unbelief of the descendants of Abraham. But when our Lord adds, "And he saw it, and was glad," He seems to add a farther thought, and to speak of Abraham as seeing and rejoicing in the *fulfilment*—not the distant hope—of the promised blessing. If so, then we must understand Him to speak of Abraham's joy in Paradise. He saw the day by faith when on earth, and rejoiced in the sight: he saw it, when it came, in its fulfilment, and again he was glad. Doubtless he, and the rest who "died in faith" (Heb. xi. 13.), were permitted from their place of rest in the unseen world (See St. Luke xvi. 22.), to behold with joy the fulfilment of the hopes they had cherished while on earth, even before Christ Himself, when the Atonement was completed, visited them with the joyful news (See 1 St. Pet. iii. 19.). It must not escape our notice that our Lord's words refer back to the words of the Jews when they said that Abraham was *dead* (See 53.). He shows them then

57 Then said the Jews unto Him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast Thou seen Abraham? A.D. 29.

58 Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, [r] I am.

59 Then [s] took they up stones to cast at Him: but Jesus hid Himself, and went out of the temple, [t] going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

[r] Ex. 3. 14. Isai. 43. 13. ch. 17. 5. 24. Col. 1. 17. Rev. 1. 8.
[s] ch. 10. 31, 39. & 11. 8.
[t] Luke 4. 30.

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by these words (if indeed we are right in supposing that "he saw it" refers rather to the sight of the fulfilment than to the prophetic foresight in which the patriarch rejoiced while on earth,) that Abraham was not really dead, but still living, and capable of rejoicing in that which they, his children after the flesh, scorned and rejected.

57. "Thou art not yet" &c. Some have gathered from this verse the idea that our Lord's appearance was such as to make Him seem older than His real age, which, as we know, was thirty three. We can well believe that the "Man of sorrows" would appear worn and aged. But this verse can scarcely be pressed so far. The Jews simply spoke in round numbers, as we say, and they would not be careful to guess at our Lord's exact age when their only object was to express their mocking scorn at the idea that One not yet fifty years old could have seen one who lived two thousand years before.

58. "Before Abraham was, I AM." These words, introduced by the solemn "Verily, verily" (See on i. 51.), are of the greatest weight as a declaration of our Christ's Divine nature and pre-existence. But first let us see how they fit in with what has gone before. We should rather have expected the Jews to have asked, 'How can Abraham 'have seen Thee?' instead of "Hast Thou seen Abraham?" And then our Lord might have told them, 'Abraham is not dead, but alive, 'and he is even now rejoicing in that salvation which ye despise.' But the Jews, putting their question in the other form, give our Lord the occasion for these glorious words, which teach us another and a far more precious truth, even that He, the speaker of them, is God from everlasting to everlasting, the great "I AM" (See on 24.), whose existence is not measured by time, "for a thousand years in His sight are "but as yesterday, seeing that is past as a watch in the night" (Ps. xc. 4.). Thus He was before (in very truth eternally before) Abraham; to whom also thoughtful persons have always held that He was pleased to reveal Himself, especially in Him who is called "the Lord" at the time of the destruction of Sodom (See Gen. xviii.). It is worth while to notice that this passage is chosen as the Gospel for the 5th Sunday in Lent, on which day Exod. iii, in which God reveals Himself to Moses by the name "I AM", is the 1st Morning Lesson.

59. "Then took they up" &c. They plainly so far understood our Lord as to consider His words blasphemous, as claiming for Himself what belongs only to God.

"Jesus hid Himself." Probably by making Himself invisible (See on v. 13. and St. Luke iv. 30.). "As Man, He fled from the "stones: but woe to them from whose stony hearts God fleeth!" (*St. Augustine.*)

A. D. 29.

CHAPTER IX.

1 *The man that was born blind restored to sight.* 8 *He is brought to the Pharisees.* 13 *They are offended at it, and excommunicate him:* 35 *but he is received of Jesus, and confesseth Him.* 39 *Who they are whom Christ enlighteneth.*

AND as *Jesus* passed by, He saw a man which was blind from *his* birth.

2 And His disciples asked Him, saying, Master,
[a] ver. 34. [a] who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?

3 Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned,
[b] ch. 11. 4. nor his parents: [b] but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.

CHAPTER IX.

The Healing of the Man born blind.

1. "Blind from his birth." There are six cases of blindness being healed specially recorded in the Gospels (See St. Matt. ix. 27—31. xx. 29—34. St. Mark viii. 22—26, and the present passage.), but this is the only case in which we are told that the man healed was blind from birth. It therefore excited the more notice and wonder, for "since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the "eyes of one that was born blind" (32.). Probably this poor beggar was well-known to the disciples by sight.

2. "Who did sin," &c. The disciples seem to have adopted the popular belief among the Jews that severe suffering was always a punishment for great sin (See on St. Luke xiii. 1—5.). Their question seems to have arisen from a difficulty in the present instance owing to the affliction having been from birth, so that it could hardly be a punishment for the sufferer's own sins. Thus they suggest that perhaps his parents may have brought this upon him by their sins, the sins of the father being visited upon his child. At any rate they lay the difficulty before their "Master", asking His opinion. It is however quite possible (as Trench thinks) that the disciples did not at the moment see that it was impossible that one side at least of their question could not be true, since the blind man could not have sinned before his birth; and so that they asked the question just as they might about any other great calamity coming to their notice.

3. "Neither hath this man sinned" &c. Plainly our Lord does not mean to state that neither this man nor his parents were sinners. His answer means that neither he nor his parents had so sinned as to bring the blindness as a punishment. The true cause of the blindness was in order that God's glory should be set forth in his cure. Thus our Lord would condemn all harsh judgments of others on account of their sufferings. These are no proof of God's anger. They are more often a proof of love. For "whom the Lord loveth He "chasteneth."

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1. "*As Jesus passed by.*" This need not refer to the same time as that spoken of at the end of the last chapter, but may simply mean, '*One day* as Jesus 'passed by.'

4 [c] I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

5 As long as I am in the world, [d] I am the Light of the world.

6 When He had thus spoken, [e] He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and He [2] anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay,

7 and said unto him, Go, wash [f] in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) [g] He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.

A.D. 29.

[c] ch. 4. 34. & 5. 19, 36. & 11. 9. & 12. 35. & 17. 4.

[d] ch. 1. 5, 9. & 3. 19. & 8. 12. & 12. 35, 46.

[e] Mark 7. 33. & 8. 23.

[2] Or, *spread the clay upon the eyes of the blind man.*

[f] Neh. 3. 15.

[g] See 2 Kin. 5. 14.

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4. "I must work" &c. Jesus had just said that the blindness of the blind man before them was in order "that the *works of God* "should "be made manifest in him." He now says He must work those works "while it is day", that is, while the time of His earthly ministry lasted, while He was "in the world" (5.). His works are God's works.

"The night cometh." Our Lord means that His working of God's works on earth would come to an end, even as the night stops the work of the earthly labourer. So He must make no delay. Here was an occasion He must not lose of doing the "works of God."

5. "I am the Light of the world." He is "the true Light which "lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (i. 9.). He is the "Sun of righteousness" arising on the earth "with healing in His "wings" (Mal. iv. 2.). Behold here the key to the spiritual understanding of this great miracle. All miracles are parables. And here we see that in giving sight to one born blind our Lord proclaims a far deeper and more glorious truth than the mere bodily blessing contained, namely the truth that He was come to dispel the clouds of spiritual darkness, and to give light to the souls of men born blind. The title our Lord here takes to Himself—"the Light of the world"—is one He claims on several other occasions (See especially viii. 12. xii. 46.).

6. "Made clay" &c. We are not able to pronounce upon the reasons for the acts of our Saviour in healing this blind man. Of course we may not attribute the cure to any healing property in the clay. It was a miracle; and the anointing with the clay was only the channel of the divine power. Probably the reasons for our Lord's proceedings were in some way connected with the spiritual welfare of the blind man, helping his weak faith, or arousing his personal sense of gratitude and attachment to his Benefactor (See on St. Mark vii. 33. viii. 25.).

7. "Go, wash" &c. This was possibly, in part at least, to wash away the clay. But it is plain that by the command the blind man's faith was put to the test, and his willing obedience, like that of the Ten Lepers (St. Luke xvii. 14.), received its blessing. How different was the conduct of Naaman the Syrian (2 Kings v. 10—12.)!

"Siloam." A pool, the ruins of which remain to this day, to the south-east of Jerusalem, and close beneath the walls. It is impossible to suppose St. John to have stated the meaning of the word unless to call special attention to that meaning. The blind man was told to go to the waters of the pool which was called "*Sent.*" Must not the

A. D. 29. 8 The neighbours therefore, and they which before had seen him that he was blind, said, Is not this he that sat and begged?

9 Some said, This is he: others *said*, He is like him: *but* he said, I am *he*.

10 Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened?

h ver. 6, 7. 11 He answered and said, [h] A Man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight.

12 Then said they unto him, Where is He? He said, I know not.

13 They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind.

14 And it was the sabbath day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes.

15 Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. He said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see.

16 Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This Man is not of God, because He keepeth not the

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Evangelist intend us to think of Him who was *the Sent* (the "Apostle" Hebr. iii. 1.), and to whom we must go for light in our darkness? The ancient fathers often compare this pool of Siloam to the waters of Baptism, in which we find spiritual cleansing from the guilt of our original sin through Him whom God hath *sent* to redeem us. On the supposition that this pool is the same as that of Bethesda See on v. 2.).

9. "**He is like him.**" The gift of sight would greatly alter the man's appearance, and would quite account for any doubt in the minds of some as to his being the same blind beggar whom they had often seen.

11. "**A Man that is called Jesus.**" This was all he knew as yet. His bodily eyes were opened, but even they had not yet looked upon his Benefactor. Soon his spiritual eye is to be opened to believe in, and to worship, the Son of God (See 35—38.).

13. "**They brought**" &c. Plainly these persons were under the influence of the Pharisees, and not well disposed towards Christ. By the Pharisees is probably meant the Sanhedrin or Council (See on St. Matt. xxvi. 3.), in which the Pharisees were at this time the most numerous and powerful party. There is nothing to show that the people brought any charge against either the man or Christ, though the next verse, stating that the healing took place on the Sabbath, may suggest one reason for their wishing to bring the case before the authorities.

15. "**Again.**" Not that the Pharisees had asked him before, but in reference to the questioning of the neighbours (10.).

16. "**This Man is not of God,**" &c. The miserable narrow-mindedness of the Jews about the Sabbath is astonishing. They continually

sabbath day. Others said, [i] How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And [k] there was a division among them. A. D. 29.

17 They say unto the blind man again, What sayest thou of Him, that He hath opened thine eyes? He said, [l] He is a prophet.

18 But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight.

19 And they asked them, saying, Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? how then doth he now see?

20 His parents answered them and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind:

21 but by what means he now seeth, we know

[i] ver. 33. ch. 3. 2.
[k] ch. 7. 12, 43. & 10. 19.
[l] ch. 4. 19. & 6. 14.

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charge our Lord with breaking the Sabbath by His miracles of mercy. The Evangelists record as many as six instances of this charge being brought against Him (See, besides the present, St. Matt. xii. 2, 10; St. Luke xiii. 14; xiv. 3; St. John v. 10.). No doubt to some extent the Jews rather sought for some charge against our Lord than really believed in the sinfulness of His act, yet the little rules and distinctions they observed as to what was lawful and what unlawful on the Sabbath were most absurd (See on St. Matt. xii. 2. and on St. John v. 17.).

"Others said," &c. Among these more right-minded Pharisees would doubtless be Nicodemus, who had said to our Lord, "No man "can do these miracles that Thou doest, except God be with him" (iii. 1; See also vii. 50.), and perhaps Joseph of Arimathæa.

17. "What sayest thou" &c. In reading this we should put force upon the word "*thou*." The Pharisees, divided among themselves, turned to the man, thinking perhaps that he could tell them more about Jesus, or at least that he could give them his impression concerning the nature of his own cure. The question means, 'What 'sayest *thou* of Him in that He hath opened thine eyes?'—or, 'with 'regard to His opening of thine eyes?' Whether this question was put by the party favourable to our Lord, or by those who said He was "not of God", does not appear. Probably by the latter, who seem to have taken the lead, and to have been the most numerous. If so, they hoped to hear from the man something they could turn against our Lord.

"He is a Prophet." That is, One sent by God, and endowed with miraculous power. Observe the boldness of this poor man. He will not be frightened into hiding his real opinion of his Benefactor (See also 30.). He confesses Christ before men; and Christ confesses him (See on 39.).

18. "The Jews did not believe" &c. They did not because they *would* not believe. These Jews were the obstinate bigoted party, who were resolved to believe no good of Jesus.

A.D. 29. not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself.

m ch. 7. 13. & 12. 42. & 19. 33. Acts 5. 13.

22 These *words* spake his parents, because [m] they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that He was Christ, he

n ver. 34. ch. 16. 2.

[n] should be put out of the synagogue.

23 Therefore said his parents, He is of age; ask him.

24 Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, [o] Give God the praise: [p] we know that this Man is a sinner.

o Josh. 7. 19. 1 Sam. 6. 5.

p ver. 16.

25 He answered and said, Whether He be a sinner *or no*, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.

26 Then said they to him again, What did He to thee? how opened He thine eyes?

27 He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear *it* again? will ye also be His disciples?

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22. **"Put out of the synagogue."** This punishment varied in severity. The lightest form of it was the being shut out from the synagogue for thirty days: the heaviest the being cut off altogether, with a curse or anathema. It was among the Jews what excommunication is among Christians (See on 1 Cor. v. 5; 1 Tim. i. 20.).

24. **"Give God the praise."** This is frequently misunderstood, as though the Jews admitted the fact of the miracle, but bade the man ascribe his cure to God, and not to Christ, who was a sinner. But the Jews did not admit the fact of the miracle at all, and seem here, having recalled the man, to wish to make him believe that they have discovered his imposture, and that his wisest course is to confess that he has been lying. The words mean, 'Give glory to God', that is, by confessing thy guilt. So Joshua said to Achan, "My son, give, I "pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto "Him" (Josh. vii. 19.). It is a solemn appeal to the man to remember that he is in God's presence, and to confess the truth.

"We know that this Man is a sinner." And that therefore He could not have wrought the miracle. Of course these words were spoken by the powerful party among the Pharisees who were bitterly opposed to Christ. There were some who thought better things (16.), but these were few, and had little power.

25. **"Whether He be a sinner" &c.** The man does not in the least mean to allow that he thought Jesus might be a sinner, only he will not enter into that question. There was the great fact—a man born blind and now seeing. That was enough for him.

26. **"What did He to thee?"** Probably they wish to get some farther evidence from the man of our Lord breaking the Sabbath.

27. **"Will ye also be His disciples?"** This is plainly spoken in irony (See St. Mark vii. 9.), the beggar growing bolder as he proceeds,

28 Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art His disciple; but we are Moses' disciples. A.D. 29.

29 We know that God spake unto Moses: *as for* this *Fellow*, [q] we know not from whence He is. [q] ch. 8. 14.

30 The man answered and said unto them, [r] Why herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence He is, and *yet* He hath opened mine eyes. [r] ch. 3. 10.

31 Now we know that [s] God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth His will, him He heareth. [s] Job 27. 9. & 35. 12. Ps. 18. 41. & 34. 15. & 66. 18. Prov. 1. 28. & 15. 29. & 28. 9. Isai. 1. 15. Jer. 11. 11. & 14. 12. Ezek. 8. 18. Micah 3. 4. Zech. 7. 13.

32 Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind.

33 [t] If this Man were not of God, He could do nothing. [t] ver. 16.

34 They answered and said unto him, [u] Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they [2] cast him out. [u] ver. 2. [2] Or, *excommunicated him*, ver. 22.

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and not caring to hide from the unbelieving Pharisees his own love and admiration of Christ.

29. "We know not from whence He is." That is, from whence come His power and commission and authority.

30. "Why herein is a marvellous thing," &c. This again is spoken in irony (See on 27.). The simple earnestness and the undaunted courage of this poor man are alike most remarkable. No words could be more fitting or more forcible than these with which he answers the blind Pharisees.

31. "God heareth not sinners." That is, of course, God heareth not wilful and hardened sinners so as to grant them such wonderful powers. Before, this man had passed over the remark of the Pharisees that Jesus was a sinner (See on 25.). But he is bolder now, and proves beyond a question that Jesus is no sinner. That God had granted Him such power as He had displayed in the miracle of healing the blind man proved that He was acceptable to God.

33. "He could do nothing." That is, nothing miraculous, such as Jesus had done.

34. "Thou wast altogether" &c. This seems to be only angry abuse. They had no argument by which to meet the beggar's courageous address, and so they tell him he was "altogether born in sin," a wretched ignorant wicked man,—and yet venturing to argue with them,—the learned and pious Pharisees!

"They cast him out." That is, out of the synagogue,—they excommunicated him (See on 22.). How truly did this poor man prove the truth of our Lord's words, "Blessed are ye, when men shall hate "you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall "reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of Man's "sake" (St. Luke vi. 22.).

A.D. 29. 35 Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said unto him, Dost
x Mat. 14. 33. & 16. 16. Mark 1. 1. ch. 10. 36. 1 John 5. 13. thou believe on [x] the Son of God?
36 He answered and said, Who is He, Lord, that I might believe on Him?
37 And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen
y ch. 4. 26. Him, and [y] it is He that talketh with thee.
38 And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped Him.
z ch. 5. 22, 27. See ch. 3. 17. & 12. 47. a Mat. 13. 13. 39 And Jesus said, [z] For judgment I am come into this world, [a] that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind.
40 And *some* of the Pharisees which were with

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35. "When He had found him." This may have been after some days. It could not have been (as some have supposed) in the Temple, where Jesus had found the "impotent man" whom He had healed at Bethesda (v. 14.), for, being "cast out", he dared not go there,—at least not till the time of his excommunication was over. This brave and faithful man, who had already confessed Christ so far as he knew how, is now to meet with his reward. "He that hath, to him shall "be given." He had faith; now his faith is to be increased and perfected. He receives "grace for grace" (i. 16.). Happy are they whom Jesus finds, and leaves not till they can say, "Lord, I believe"!

36. "Who is He, Lord," &c. Though as yet ignorant of the Son of God, he is ready to believe as soon as he learns the truth. God ever teaches the teachable. Jesus reveals Himself to the lowly.

38. "Lord, I believe." Such is his simple but most blessed confession of faith. It is like that of the Ethiopian, "I believe that "Jesus Christ is the Son of God" (Acts viii. 37.). These are no mere form of words, but utterances of the whole heart and soul.

"He worshipped Him." Thereby proving the reality and sincerity of his faith. His faith, working by love, led him to fall at his Saviour's feet in lowly and grateful adoration. Blessed are all who thus believe, and thus adore!

39. "For judgment" &c. This sentence is a sort of Divine comment upon the foregoing miracle. Our Lord was not yet come for the final judgment of the world; nor yet to be a Judge in earthly things (See St. Luke xii. 14.). Yet His very coming was a judging of men, because by it they were tried, and their true state and character brought to light. He was set, as holy Simeon declared, "for the "fall and rising again of many in Israel," and "that the thoughts of "many hearts" might "be revealed" (St. Luke ii. 34, 35.). He was the Stone, which was to some "a chief Corner-stone, elect, precious," and to others "a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence" (1 St. Peter ii. 6, 8.). And this proving and discerning of men was shown most strikingly in the miracle. The poor blind beggar is proved to be the faithful and true, and to him is given sight, both of body and soul. The proud Pharisees, who professed to see, and supposed none so good or so learned as themselves, are shown to be blind, and are left in their wilful and obstinate darkness.

Him heard these words, [b] and said unto Him, Are we blind also? A.D. 29.

[b] Rom. 2. 19.

41 Jesus said unto them, [c] If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth. [c] ch. 15. 22, 24.

CHAPTER X.

1 *Christ is the Door, and the good Shepherd.* 19 *Divers opinions of Him.* 24 *He proveth by His works that He is Christ the Son of God:* 39 *escapeth the Jews,* 40 *and went again beyond Jordan, where many believed on Him.*

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40. "Are we blind also?" They could not help understanding something of our Lord's meaning, and they ask, in wrath and astonishment, whether He ventures to accuse *them* of blindness.

41. "If ye were blind," &c. That is, 'If ye were really blind—'unable to see the truth—then there would be an excuse for your con-'duct; but now ye boast of your light, and indeed ye *have* light, for 'God has committed to you the light of His oracles,—ye might see 'plainly enough, if ye would,—therefore ye are judged and condemned '—"your sin remaineth."' How awful a warning to those to whom God has given the light of truth, and who will not use it!

CHAPTER X.

1—21. The True and the False Shepherds.

This passage is closely connected with the conversation at the end of the last chapter. When the Pharisees asked, "Are *we* blind also?" (ix. 40.), they doubtless meant, 'Are *we*—the leaders and teachers of 'the people—to be charged with blindness?' So that the discourse concerning the true and the false shepherds would apply at once to them. They had taken upon themselves to shut out from God's fold one who had entered in by the Door, thus proving that they themselves were no true and faithful pastors. Our Lord therefore declares first that every true shepherd must enter by Himself as the Door, and afterwards (in 7 and 9.) that what is true of the shepherd is true of the sheep. He is the "Door of the sheep", as He is of the shepherd.

We may observe that in the first six verses Jesus speaks chiefly of *human* shepherds, though He speaks of them in their likeness to Himself—the one true Shepherd. He does not unfold Himself in this character till the later part of the discourse, and even then first speaks of Himself as "the Door" (7.) before the distinct announcement, "I "am the Good Shepherd" (11.). Thus His Divine teaching, as in other cases (See especially the discourse in vi.), gradually ascends from the lower to the higher.

Or we may divide the passage in a different way, and say that in the first ten verses our Lord speaks of Himself as the Door of the sheepfold, and then (in 11.) passes on to speak of Himself as the Good Shepherd.

Like the Parable of the Vine (See on xv. 1.), this, though called a parable (6.), is not one in the strict sense of the word. It is rather a discourse cast in figurative language.

A.D. 29. VERILY, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.

2 But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.

3 To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear

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1. "He that entereth not" &c. The weighty manner in which this saying is uttered, with the "Verily, verily" (See on i. 51.), shows it to be rather a solemn word of warning to the hearers than the beginning of a new discourse. In this whole parable the "sheepfold" represents the Church of Christ. For the old sheepfold of Israel in its narrowness was passing away, and changing into the new all-embracing world-wide sheepfold of the Catholic Church of Christ. The "door" is plainly the important word in the whole passage, since the great distinction between the true and the false shepherds lies in their entering or not entering *through the door*. This door is Christ Himself, for He says, "I am the Door" (7.). What then is to enter in by the Door? It is spoken of those holding office, or taking upon themselves to hold office, as pastors in the Church of Christ. These, to be true pastors, must enter upon their office through the door of Christ. They must be "truly called according to the will of our Lord Jesus "Christ" (See 1st question in the Ordering of Priests.). This has both an inward and an outward sense: an inward, for no visible ordination or outward commission will avail to make a man a true pastor without living faith in Christ; an outward, for no spiritual gifts or fancied inward call will make a man a true pastor without visible ordination and outward commission. As to the need of the inward faith in Christ, it is well said, "No self-confident deacon; no ambitious, or "covetous, or ease-loving priest; no proud prelate; none of these, "though in right lineal descent from the Twelve or the Seventy, enter "the sheepfold by Christ the Door" (*Is. Williams.*). As to the need of the outward commission, we may take the example of Christ Himself, for it is written, "No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he "that is called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not "Himself to be made an High Priest; but He that said unto Him, "Thou art My Son, to day have I begotten Thee" (Heb. v. 4, 5.). And again, St. Paul asks, "How shall they preach except they be sent?" (Rom. x. 15.). He who takes upon himself the office of pastor lacking one or both of these requirements is called "a thief and a robber", because he steals the sheep from the true fold, and draws them away into paths full of peril. It may be observed how fitly this passage has been chosen by the Church as one of the Gospels in the Ordination of Priests.

3. "To him the porter openeth." The "porter", or 'gatekeeper', here is generally understood to mean the Holy Spirit, for it is the Holy Spirit who strengthens every true pastor for the work of his ministry, working in him faith in Christ and likeness to Christ, and confirming in him the gift given him in the laying on of the hands of the bishop and presbyters. It is also the same Divine Gate-keeper

his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, A. D. 29.
and leadeth them out.

4 And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.

5 And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.

6 This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which He spake unto them.

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who opens to the pastor the hearts of the sheep, and blesses his going among them.

"The sheep hear his voice." By the "sheep" throughout this parable is meant the *true* sheep only. These know and obey the voice of the true pastor. They desire to be led, and are thankful for his loving guidance. They "hear his voice", because his voice is but an echo of the Good Shepherd's. He is to them an "ambassador for "Christ" (2 Cor. v. 20.).

"He calleth his own sheep by name." By "his own sheep" is meant those whom God has committed to his care and keeping. This verse surely describes a very intimate personal knowledge and affection between the shepherd and the flock. But if true of the earthly shepherd, how much truer of the heavenly! "The Lord knoweth them "that are His" (2 Tim. ii. 19.), and has a separate care for each one of them.

"Leadeth them out." Not away from the fold, but leadeth them forth to the green pastures and still waters.

4. "When he putteth forth" &c. It is common in many countries to see the shepherds walking in front of their sheep, and this practice most beautifully pictures the duty of the shepherds of souls. True pastors are "ensamples to the flock" (1 St. Pet. v. 3.). They not only direct the sheep, but lead them. This again, which is true of all good pastors, is plainly most true of the Good Shepherd. Precept is little without example.

"The sheep follow him:" &c. These words draw a very striking picture of the loving and trustful relations between the faithful pastor and his flock. He walks before them, not only teaching, admonishing, encouraging them, but also by his example showing them the way. They follow him, knowing the voice which has often spoken words of help to them before, and trusting the guidance they have proved. Oh that this were a true picture of all pastors and all flocks!

5. "A stranger will they not follow," &c. By a "stranger" is meant a false teacher,—one who has not entered by the Door, and who is therefore "a thief and a robber" (1.). But alas! many sheep do follow strangers, being led astray by all manner of false doctrine. This is too true, but then these are not the loving trustful sheep, who have known the guidance of a faithful shepherd. It is of such that Christ here speaks, and such will not listen to the allurements of false teachers.

A.D. 29. 7 Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily,
I say unto you, I am the Door of the sheep.
8 All that ever came before Me are thieves and
robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.
[a] ch. 14. 6. Eph. 2. 18. 9 [a] I am the Door: by Me if any man enter in,

7. "I am the Door of the sheep." Our Lord now partly unfolds the meaning of the figurative language He has used, adding to it some new thoughts. It is doubtful here whether the words "the Door of "the sheep" are a simple explanation of the "door" in the first two verses, or whether they are to be taken in the wider sense in which "the Door" is used in verse 9. If the former, then "the Door of the "sheep" must mean 'the Door leading to the sheep—the Door by 'which the true shepherds enter the sheepfold to tend the sheep'. And it seems by the next verse probable that our Lord is speaking in this sense. Still most commentators understand the words in the wider sense, and point out here, what is certainly taught in verse 9, that Christ is the way by which the sheep, as truly as the shepherd, enter the fold.

8. "All that ever came before Me." This, of course, cannot be spoken of the prophets and priests under the old covenant, for, though they could not actually bear Christ's commission in the same sense in which His ministers do now, yet they foretold of Him, and so did truly enter in by Him the Door. These "thieves and robbers" are plainly false teachers, who came into the fold not by Christ, but "some "other way" (1.). They took upon themselves to feed the sheep without having the Good Shepherd's commission, and thus they were "thieves and robbers", stealing away souls from the truth, and robbing God of His own. And such there are now.

"But the sheep did not hear them." Not that some were not deceived. But the true sheep—the faithful loving guileless ones among God's people—had grace given them to refuse to listen to the voice of the false teachers. God bids not His sheep to follow blindfold any that say they are shepherds. The sheep have a choice to make. Let them pray to choose aright.

9. "I am the Door:" &c. This is now spoken in a wider sense than before. *Before* Jesus was the Door of entrance for every true pastor: *here* He is the Door of entrance for every true sheep. It is "*any man*", who may now enter in by Christ, and be saved. There is only one entrance for shepherd and sheep. We saw in the case of the shepherd (See on 1.) that to enter by Christ as the Door means to enter in the manner in which Christ wills and by the way which He appoints, and that this has both an inward and an outward sense. It is so also in the case of the sheep. To enter by Christ as the Door must imply the necessity of a living Faith in Christ: but it must also imply the necessity of that outward ordinance which Christ has willed to appoint as the Sacrament of admission to His Church. "He that "believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (St. Mark xvi. 16.). This is nothing else than "By Me if any man enter in he shall be saved"; for the baptized believer has entered in by Christ. At the same time, since our Lord's whole discourse is concerning the *faithful* sheep of His fold, it is probable that He is referring, not so much to the great outward rite of admission, as to the faith which that rite presupposes,

he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. A. D. 29.

10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have *it* more abundantly.

11 [b] I am the Good Shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. [b] Isai. 40. 11. Ezek. 34. 12, 23. & 37. 24. Heb. 13. 20. 1 Pet. 2. 25. & 5. 4.

12 But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and [c] leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. [c] Zech. 11. 16, 17.

13 The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.

14 I am the Good Shepherd, and [d] know My *sheep*, and am known of Mine. [d] 2 Tim. 2. 19.

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and without which its benefits must be forfeited. But "not only is "Christ the Door, by which the sheep are at first admitted: it is by "Him also that they go in and out, and find pasture. He is the Door "both of grace here and of glory hereafter. It is by Him that we first "enter the Church, and by Him that we find there food and pasture "for our souls, in the Sacrament of His Body and Blood, in the study "of His Holy Word, in the exercise of prayer and meditation, or in "patient continuance in well-doing. It is by Him also that, if it so "please God, when we leave this world, we shall enter into Heaven, "where He Himself, the Lamb which is in the midst of the Throne, "shall feed us and lead us unto living fountains of waters" (*Peter Young.*).

10. "I am come" &c. Jesus is already passing from Himself as the Door to Himself as the Shepherd, thus leading up to the words of the next verse. He not only gives life to the sheep, but abundance of life—a rich and plentiful store for such as hunger and thirst for it;—a life too far more blessed and overflowing than had been given under the older covenant.

11. "I am the Good Shepherd:" &c. Here begins the second part of this wonderful discourse (See on 1.). The Door has passed into the Shepherd. Who is not at once reminded of the prophet's exquisite picture; "He shall feed His flock like a shepherd: He shall gather "the lambs with His Arm, and carry them in His Bosom, and shall "gently lead those that are with young" (Is. xl. 11.)? Yet here there is more than in this picture; for the Good Shepherd gives not only His loving care and tender guidance, but even His life itself, for the sheep. "Greater love hath no man than this" (xv. 13.).

12. "He that is an hireling," &c. The hired shepherd will not care for the sheep as their owner does. He will not risk his life for them. But Christ is no "hireling", having the care of the flock of another. The sheep are His own. The Father gave them to Him, and He will shed His Life-blood to save them from the wolf.

14. "And know My sheep," &c. The English translation in this

A. D. 29.

15 [e] As the Father knoweth Me, even so know I
[e] Mat. 11. 27. the Father: [f] and I lay down My life for the sheep.
[f] ch. 15. 13.
[g] Isai. 56. 8. 16 And [g] other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall
[h] Ezek. 37. 22. Eph. 2. 14. 1 Pet. 2. 25. hear My voice; [h] and there shall be one fold, *and* one Shepherd.
[i] Isai. 53. 7, 8, 12. Heb. 2. 9. 17 Therefore doth My Father love Me, [i] because I lay down My life, that I might take it again.

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place is not so clear as it should be. The first part of verse 15 should be joined with verse 14, and the whole sentence should run thus:—'I 'know My sheep, and am known of Mine, even as the Father knoweth 'Me, and I know the Father.' Thus Christ compares the close and intimate knowledge between Himself and His sheep with that which exists between Himself and the Father. This is no mere knowledge of an all-seeing eye; it is the knowledge of an all-loving heart:—the knowledge of those who are more than friends, and closer than brothers. Such a knowledge we believe to be in the Shepherd: but alas! how rarely do we find it in the sheep!

16. "Other sheep." Plainly of the Gentiles, "this fold" signifying the Jews, from whom the first "little flock" of Christ's disciples was gathered. Christ says, "*I have*" these other sheep. So also He said to His apostle at Corinth, "I have much people in this city" (Acts xviii. 10.), though as yet He had them not. But He knew they should be His. These He "must bring", that is, bring into His fold, as (God be praised!) He has already in His mercy brought us. And now there are to be no more national distinctions: the Church of Christ is Catholic, or universal; "God is no respecter of persons" (Acts x. 34.); Jews and Gentiles are to form "one fold", or, as it more literally is, 'one flock', under One Shepherd.

17. "Therefore doth My Father" &c. This love of the Father towards the Son springs of necessity from that intimate *knowledge* spoken of before (See on 14.). But how is it said by our Lord that His laying down of His life is the *cause* of the Father's love? This is a great mystery. Perhaps it cannot be rightly understood till all mysteries are cleared away. Yet we know thus much:—namely, that the Father's love to the Son was not *produced* by the Son's voluntary Sacrifice. That Sacrifice was part of the eternal counsel of the ever-blessed Trinity, and though the Son said, "Lo! I come", yet it was to *do the Father's will* that He came. Father and Son have no diversity of will. Thus, although the Father loves the Son for His Sacrifice, yet He loves Him, and has loved Him eternally, as One whose will in dying for man is in perfect unity with His own will. We must observe moreover that the Resurrection is as much the purpose of the Son as the Crucifixion. His will was to earn (as Man) "the Crown through the Cross" (*Alford.*). He could not will to die except with the purpose of rising again. And in this too was there perfect unity of will, and therefore perfect love, between the Father and the Son. So that it is said of the Father that He raised the Son (See 1 Cor. xv. 15.), and of the Son that He raised Himself. The Son had power to lay down His life, and to take it again, and yet He did so by "commandment" of the Father (18.).

18 No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I [k] have power to take it again. [l] This commandment have I received of My Father. A. D. 29.

19 [m] There was a division therefore again among the Jews for these sayings.

20 And many of them said, [n] He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye Him?

21 Others said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil. [o] Can a devil [p] open the eyes of the blind?

22 ¶ And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter.

[k] ch. 2. 19.
[l] ch. 6. 38. & 15. 10. Acts 2. 24, 32.
[m] ch. 7. 43. & 9. 16.
[n] ch. 7. 20. & 8. 48, 52.
[o] Ex. 4. 11. Ps. 94. 9. & 146. 8.
[p] ch. 9. 6, 7, 32, 33.

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18. "No man taketh it" &c. Our Lord here distinctly asserts His Divine power over His own life. His enemies could have had no power against Him except by His own free will. We remember how, when submitting to be taken captive by them, He said, "Thinkest "thou that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He shall presently "give Me more than twelve legions of angels?" (St. Matt. xxvi. 53.).

"This commandment" &c. Having asserted His Divine sovereignty, Jesus again bows to His accepted humiliation. It is as though He said, 'I have a will and power over My life and death, yet My will 'is to obey My Father's will.' Mark too the Psalmist's words, applied in the Epistle to the Hebrews to Christ, "Then said I, Lo, I come: "in the volume of the book it is written of Me; I delight to do Thy "will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My Heart" (Ps. xl. 7, 8; Heb. x. 7.).

19. "A division." As there had been before, immediately after the miracle of healing the blind man (See ix. 16.). We must bear in mind that the discourse in this chapter grew out of the miracle recorded in the last (See on the beginning of this chapter), so that the "division" here spoken of was probably only at a later hour in the same day with that spoken of in the last chapter. Indeed it is plain that the miracle of the opening of the blind man's eyes was still present to the thoughts of the people, since those who took our Lord's part in the "division" ask again, as before (ix. 16.), "Can a devil open "the eyes of the blind?" (21.).

22—42. Discourse at the Feast of Dedication.

22. "The feast of the dedication." This Feast, which was held in December, was not one of Divine appointment, but was instituted

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22. "*The feast of the dedication.*" We have no note of the time of any event between the mention of the Feast of Tabernacles in vii. 2. and the mention of the Feast of Dedication in this place. The former took place in October, the latter in December, and both Feasts were plainly those next before our Lord's last Passover, that is, in the last year of His public ministry. Many accordingly think that all that has been related from the beginning of chapter vii. to this place took place at the Feast of Tabernacles (but See *Note* on ix. 1.).

A.D. 29.

23 And Jesus walked in the temple [q] in Solomon's porch.

[q] Acts 3. 11. & 5. 12.

24 Then came the Jews round about Him, and said unto Him, How long dost Thou [2] make us to doubt? If Thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.

[2] Or, *hold us in suspense?*

25 Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: [r] the works that I do in My Father's name, they bear witness of Me.

[r] ver. 38. ch. 3. 2. & 5. 36.

26 But [s] ye believe not, because ye are not of My sheep, as I said unto you.

[s] ch. 8. 47. 1 John 4. 6.

27 [t] My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me:

[t] ver. 4, 14.

28 and I give unto them eternal life; and [u] they shall never perish, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of My hand.

[u] ch. 6. 37. & 17. 11, 12. & 18. 9.

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by Judas Maccabæus about two hundred years before this time in memory of the purification and re-dedication of the Temple after it had been polluted by Antiochus (See 1 Macc. iv. 36—59. 2 Macc. x. 1—8.). "Our Lord's being pleased to honour it with His presence has been "justly regarded as a proof of the lawfulness of the appointment of "religious festivals by human authority, and of the obligation of the "people to observe them" (*P. Young.*).

"It was winter." This is said by St. John probably to account for our Lord's being in "Solomon's Porch", a covered and beautiful portico or gallery on the East side of the Temple, and said to have been part of the original Temple of Solomon. In the shelter of this Porch our Lord was now walking.

24. "How long" &c. The Jews, who asked this question, perhaps deceived themselves into thinking that they really could not decide with regard to our Lord's claims. 'How long dost Thou keep us in 'doubt?' they ask, demanding from Him some plainer declaration of 'His Messiahship than they had yet heard.

25. "I told you," &c. Christ had often told them with sufficient plainness who He was. It was not their heads which wanted convincing, but their hearts. What He had said to them concerning the Good Shepherd, as related in this very chapter, might have taught them who He claimed to be, had they cared to learn. He will not tell them more plainly, for He knows it would be in vain. They are not His sheep, not of those who hear His voice, and follow Him. He only reminds them once more of the witness which His own works bear to Him (See v. 36.). This is enough for any candid truth-loving mind.

28. "They shall never perish," &c. This is the glorious gift which the Good Shepherd gives to His sheep—even eternal salvation. Words could hardly be stronger to express the perfect safety of Christ's true sheep. In like manner does St. Paul speak, when he says, "I am "persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, "nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor

29 [x] My Father, [y] which gave *them* Me, is greater than all; and no *man* is able to pluck *them* out of My Father's hand. A.D. 29.
[x] ch. 14. 28.
[y] ch. 17. 2, 6, &c.

30 [z] I and *My* Father are one.
[z] ch. 17. 11, 22.

31 Then [a] the Jews took up stones again to stone Him.
[a] ch. 8. 59.

32 Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from My Father; for which of those works do ye stone Me?

33 The Jews answered Him, saying, For a good work we stone Thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that Thou, being a man, [b] makest Thyself God.
[b] ch. 5. 18.

34 Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, **I said, Ye are gods?** Ps. 82. 6.

"depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the "love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. viii. 38, 39.). Yet such blessed passages must not be so read as if none others were to be found which speak of Christians falling away and being lost. The great truth they assure us of is that no power in heaven or earth or hell can rob us of our inheritance, and cut us off from God's love. We are safe from all *external* foes so long as we abide in Christ's fold. The wolf cannot approach to hurt us. Yet dare we therefore say that we are safe from *ourselves?*

29. "Greater than all." That is, greater than all those enemies who might try to pluck the sheep out of His Hand,—that is (both here and in the last verse), out of His protecting power. Christ speaks in exactly the same way of His own Hand and His Father's Hand, as though there were no difference, and this He confirms in the next verse.

30. "I and My Father are One." One in "substance, power, and "eternity" (Art. i.), and therefore one in that protecting care which is spoken of under the figure of the Hand.

31. "Then the Jews" &c. Several times, and perhaps oftener than is recorded, did our Lord's enemies attempt to murder Him (See St. Luke iv. 29. St. John v. 18. viii. 59.). Their rage was especially aroused by His words claiming to be the Son of God or equal with God, and this shows how idle was their pretence of wishing Him to tell them more plainly who He was (See 24.).

34. "Is it not written" &c. Jesus answers not, 'I speak no blas-'phemy, for it is true; I am God'; for this would enrage His enemies the more: neither does He answer, 'Ye mistake My meaning; I say 'not that I am God'; for this would be to contradict the truth to which it was His great purpose to lead those who could receive it. So He condescends to take a lower ground than He might have taken, and to reason with them from the language of their own "law", that is, their own scriptures, showing that He had said no more of Himself than the Scriptures said of others, so that they had no right to accuse Him of blasphemy. The words, "I have said, Ye are gods", are quoted

A. D. 29. 35 If He called them gods, [d] unto whom the word
[d] Rom. 13. 1. of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken;
[e] ch. 6. 27. 36 say ye of Him, [e] whom the Father hath sanc-
[f] ch. 3. 17. & 5. 36, 37. & 8. 42. tified, and [f] sent into the world, Thou blasphemest;
[g] ver. 30. ch. 5. 17, 18. because I said, I am [h] the Son of God?
[h] Luke 1. 35. ch. 9. 35, 37.

from the 82nd Psalm, and plainly refer back to other passages in which the word "gods" is used of some who were only men. Now we find that the judges of the people were so spoken of in the Book of Exodus. Thus in Ex. xxi. 6. xxii. 8. 9, the word translated "judges" is literally 'gods', and in xxii. 28. where the word "gods" is given, the same persons are plainly meant, the word in the Hebrew being the same. In what sense these rulers of old were called "gods" our Lord in part explains in the next verse, but meanwhile we must not omit to notice that the Psalm from which the words are quoted expressly declares that those who bore the exalted title of "gods" would perish as men. The first verse uses the very expression we are considering, saying of God, "He judgeth among the gods", that is, 'among all other judges 'and rulers.' Then the sixth and seventh verses, from which our Lord quotes, are as follows: "I have said, Ye are gods; and all of "you are children of the Most High: but ye shall die like men, and "fall like one of the princes."

35. "If He called them gods," &c. Observe the reason our Lord here states for the giving to men the awful title of "gods." It was given to those "unto whom the word of God came;"—that is, to those bearing God's commission to judge and govern His people. These were as vessels filled with Divine power and authority. It should be observed that the Hebrew word for "gods" (translated "judges" in Ex. xxi. 6. xxii. 8. 9, and "gods" in Ex. xxii. 28.) may also signify 'powers'. We are not to gather from this passage that men may lawfully take this tremendous title to themselves. But, where God in His revealed law uses such a title of His commissioned servants, it cannot be said (our Lord would argue) to be in all cases blasphemous to use it: else the law itself were blasphemous in thus speaking. May we not see in such a use of the word "gods" in the Old Testament a sort of foreshadowing of the union of the Godhead with the Manhood which was complete only in Christ? And may not our Lord have desired to show that even under the older covenant the idea of the Divine power and majesty imparted to, and resting upon, man was not altogether unknown?

"The scripture cannot be broken." Literally, cannot be 'made 'void': that is, it must have its meaning and its fulfilment. We should weigh well such words as these, in which the Son of God Himself sets His seal to the entire truthfulness of the Old Testament Scriptures.

36. "Sanctified." This word is not used in its more usual sense of 'made holy', but means rather 'set forth before the world as holy.' Christ was sent into the world as the pattern of perfect holiness. The argument may be summed up thus: 'If mere men, inspired by God, 'were in old times called "gods" in that scripture which you revere, 'and which is certainly true, must it be blasphemy in One whom the 'Father has sent in perfect holiness into the world to claim to be the 'Son of God?'

37 [i] If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not. A.D. 29. [i] ch. 15. 24.

38 But if I do, though ye believe not Me, [k] believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, [l] that the Father *is* in Me, and I in Me. [k] ch. 5. 36. & 14. 10, 11. [l] ch. 14. 10, 11. & 17. 21.

39 [m] Therefore they sought again to take Him: but He escaped out of their hand, [m] ch. 7. 30, 44. & 8. 59.

40 and went away again beyond Jordan into the place [n] where John at first baptized; and there He abode. [n] ch. 1. 28.

41 And many resorted unto Him, and said, John did no miracle: [o] but all things that John spake of this Man were true. [o] ch. 3. 30.

42 [p] And many believed on Him there. [p] ch. 8. 30. & 11. 45.

CHAPTER XI.

1 *Christ raiseth Lazarus, four days buried.* 45 *Many Jews believe.* 47 *The high priests and Pharisees gather a council against Christ.* 49 *Caiaphas prophesieth.* 54 *Jesus hid Himself.* 55 *At the passover they enquire after Him, and lay wait for Him.* A.D. 30. 34th Year of our Lord's life.

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37. "**If I do not**" &c. Once again does our Lord appeal to His works as the proof of His Divine nature and mission (See on v. 36.). But how were the Jews to know whether His works were the works of His Father or no? Doubtless by their accordance with that character of God which had been already sufficiently revealed to them in the Scriptures to enable any fair and candid mind to judge.

39. "**Therefore they sought**" &c. Our Lord's patient and gentle words move them not. They are blinded by prejudice, and will not see. Thus they seek again to take Him, either in order to lead Him out and stone Him, or to bring Him before the Sanhedrin, or high court of justice (See on St. Matt. xxvi. 3.), to be tried.

"**He escaped.**" Possibly by rendering Himself invisible (See v. 13. viii. 59. and St. Luke iv. 30.).

40. "**Where John**" &c. This was at Bethabara (See i. 28.).

41. "**John did no miracle:**" &c. The place of our Lord's retirement reminded the people of the testimony of St. John the Baptist, which they had listened to in that spot three years before. It was true that John had not confirmed his word with signs following; he had done no miracle to prove the truth of his witness to Christ. But many now felt, as his words came vividly back to them, that Christ had indeed fulfilled all that the Baptist had spoken of Him. The force of that mighty voice crying in the wilderness came back and wrought conviction at last. Let the minister of Christ weigh this. He can do no miracle; but let him faithfully preach Christ, taking care that all things that he speaks concerning Him are true, and many will believe on Him.

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40. "*Beyond Jordan.*" See *Note* on i. 28, *Note* on St. Matt. xix. 1, and *Commentary* on St. Luke ix. 51.

A.D. 30.

NOW a certain *man* was sick, *named* Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of [a] Mary and her sister Martha.

[a] Luke 10. 38, 39.

[b] Matt. 26. 7. Mark 14. 3. ch. 12. 3.

2 ([b] It was *that* Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.)

3 Therefore his sisters sent unto Him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom Thou lovest is sick.

4 When Jesus heard *that*, He said, This sickness is not unto death, [c] but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.

[c] ver. 40. ch. 9. 3.

CHAPTER XI.

1—45. The Raising of Lazarus.

1. "Lazarus." Not once named by the other Evangelists (See on St. Matt. xxvi. 6. St. Luke x. 38.). It is impossible not to be struck with the fact that the great miracle of the Raising of Lazarus is recorded only in this Gospel, but when we consider the multitude of our Lord's miracles (See xxi. 25.), it is not surprising that different ones should be related in the different Gospels. It is quite possible that our Lord raised many others from the dead besides the three recorded.

"Bethany, the town of Mary" &c. Doubtless Mary and Martha were for some reason better known by name to the early Christians than Lazarus. Perhaps they were noted for good works. At all events St. John, writing long after the events, takes for granted that his readers will know the names of the two sisters rather than that of Lazarus. He may have done so on account of St. Luke's story of them (x. 38—42.), or because that and other stories concerning them were frequent subjects of instruction in the primitive Church.

2. "It was that Mary which anointed" &c. That is, 'who *afterwards* anointed', for this anointing took place on either the Friday or the Saturday evening before the Crucifixion (See *Note* on St. Matt. xxi. 1.), and this story St. John assumes to be well known, since he uses it to point out which Mary he is speaking of. He himself relates the story at the beginning of the next chapter.

3. "Sent." Jesus was at this time at Bethabara beyond Jordan, whither He had retired from the malice of His enemies (See i. 28. x. 39, 40.).

"Lord, behold," &c. "They said not, Come. To One that loved, "it was enough to send tidings; enough that He knew it. For He "does not love, and forsake" (*St. Augustine.*).

"He whom Thou lovest." Mark how Lazarus here shares the title of the Evangelist himself—"the disciple whom Jesus loved." Dearly as St. John prized this blessed title, yet he grudged it not to Lazarus.

"Sick." For "whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth" (Hebr. xii. 6.).

4. "Not unto death." Jesus knew what He would do. The sickness which the anxious sisters had sent to tell Him of was not to end, as another sickness might, in the loss of their brother. Death was not the end (See on 11.). Yet after receiving this message the sisters

5 Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and A.D. 30.
Lazarus.

6 When He had heard therefore that he was sick,
[d] He abode two days still in the same place where [d] ch. 10. 40.
He was.

7 Then after that saith He to *His* disciples, Let us go into Judæa again.

8 *His* disciples say unto Him, Master, [e] the Jews [e] ch. 10. 31.
of late sought to stone Thee; and goest Thou thither again?

9 Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? [f] If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth [f] ch. 9. 4.
not, because he seeth the light of this world.

10 But [g] if a man walk in the night, he stum- [g] ch. 12. 35.
bleth, because there is no light in him.

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saw their brother die;—they saw him buried. How sore a trial to their faith!

5. "Now Jesus loved" &c. O blessed family, to be thus loved by the Son of God! Lazarus sick; the sisters sad; yet all beloved. Welcome sickness, welcome sorrow, if only with them be the love of Christ.

6. "He abode two days." This did not *look* like love. And many of God's dealings with us do not *look* like love. We marvel often at God's seeming deafness to our prayers. Yet love is in the delay or the refusal as surely as in the granting of our requests. Often, too, some dealings of God with us, which perplex us, may be for the good of *others*. In this case the Saviour Himself declares one reason for His delay to be the strengthening of the disciples' faith (See 15.). Another reason doubtless was the conversion of many unbelievers (See 45.).

7. "Into Judæa." In which province Bethany was. Jesus was in Peræa, the part beyond the Jordan, whither He had gone when the Jews sought to take Him (x. 40. See also on St. Matt. xix. 1.).

9. "Are there not twelve hours" &c. "Our Lord's meaning seems "to be, 'There are twelve hours of the day: the night cannot come "'until those hours are over. So it is with Me: death cannot come "'to Me until the time appointed. That time, Mine hour, is not yet "'come. I may therefore go with safety into the land of the Jews'" (*Cottage Commentary.*). For, just as a man walking in the day-light does not stumble, so neither can I be in danger while the appointed day of My earthly work lasts. Our Lord has already used the same figure, comparing His earthly life to a day, on a former occasion (See ix. 4.).

10. "But if a man" &c. In these words our Lord turns from Himself to draw a lesson for His disciples, using the figure of light and darkness in a different sense. We may perhaps draw out the whole passage thus:—'As a man walking in the daylight does not 'stumble, so I cannot be in danger while the time of my appointed 'work on earth still lasts: but do you think of this,—that, as a man

A. D. 30.

11 These things said He: and after that He saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus [h] sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.

12 Then said His disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well.

13 Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that He had spoken of taking of rest in sleep.

14 Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.

15 And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him.

16 Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellowdisciples, Let us also go, that we may die with Him.

17 Then when Jesus came, He found that he had *lain* in the grave four days already.

[h] So Deut. 31. 16. Dan. 12. 2. Matt. 9. 24. Acts 7. 60. 1 Cor. 15. 18, 51.

'walking in darkness does stumble, so will you fall, if you leave Me, 'who am the true Light, shining not only over you, but *in* you.'

11. "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth." Death is continually spoken of as sleep in holy Scripture (See St. Matt. ix. 24. Acts vii. 60. 1 Cor. xv. 51.). To those who can say 'I believe in the Resurrection of 'the dead' death is indeed no more. How full is this chapter of proofs of our Lord's human love and tenderness! Lazarus is His "friend." He "loved" the brother and sisters (5.). He "groaned in the spirit, "and was troubled", when He saw Mary and her friends weeping (33.). He Himself "wept" (35.). Verily "we have not an High Priest which "cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities" (Heb. iv. 15.).

12. "He shall do well." That is, 'he will recover.' It seems to us strange that the disciples should not have caught their Master's real meaning more readily, especially when three of them had heard Him use the same expression concerning Jairus' daughter. But we find them often slow in understanding spiritual things.

15. "To the intent ye may believe." That is, 'in order that your 'faith may be confirmed and strengthened'. Our Lord does not mean that they had *no* faith before.

16. "Then said Thomas," &c. 'Thomas', which is a Jewish word, means the same as 'Didymus', which is Greek, namely, 'a twin'. This saying of St. Thomas, which seems to express a mournful willingness to suffer with his beloved Lord, is quite in accordance with what we know of him. He seems to have been "of a desponding character; "most true to his Master, yet ever inclined to look at things on their "darkest side" (*Abp. Trench.* See xiv. 5. xx. 25.). He appears not to have understood our Lord's assurance of His own safety (See 9.), and to have believed that great peril awaited them in Judæa.

17. "Four days." It is not likely that our Lord's journey to Bethany would occupy more than one day. In that case Lazarus must

18 Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, [2] about fifteen furlongs off: A. D. 30.

[2] That is, *about two miles.*

19 and many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother.

20 Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him: but Mary sat *still* in the house.

21 Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

22 But I know, that even now, [i] whatsoever Thou wilt ask of God, God will give *it* Thee. [i] ch. 9. 31.

23 Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again.

24 Martha saith unto Him, [k] I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. [k] Luke 14. 14. ch. 5. 29.

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have died on the same day on which the message was sent to our Lord. Having waited two days more after receiving the message (See 6.), He would arrive on the fourth, and as it was the custom for the Jews to bury on the day of death, Lazarus would have "lain in the grave "four days already."

18. "Fifteen furlongs." Eight furlongs making a mile, this would be nearly two miles. It is mentioned to account for "many of the "Jews", plainly from Jerusalem, visiting the sisters in their sorrow to offer them the comfort which One alone could bring.

20. "Mary sat still" &c. She had not heard of our Lord's approach (See 28, 29.), and so we must not press too much the conduct of the two sisters on this occasion. But perhaps even in the little point named in this verse their natural characters show themselves. Martha is ever active, Mary ever quiet (See on St. Luke x. 39, 40.).

21. "Lord, if Thou hadst been here," &c. This is the uppermost thought in each sister's mind (See 32.). If only the Lord had been in time!

22. "But I know" &c. Martha here acknowledges to a hope which she dares hardly put into words. It is too much to dare to think that "even now" their brother may be given back to them. "High "thoughts and poor thoughts of Christ mingle here together;—high "thoughts, while she sees Him as One whose effectual fervent prayers "will greatly prevail:—poor thoughts, while she thinks of Him as "*obtaining* by prayer what indeed He *has* by the oneness of His na- "ture with God" (*Trench.*).

24. "I know that he shall rise" &c. Our Lord's promise—"Thy "brother shall rise again"—was of doubtful meaning, perhaps purposely so. And Martha cannot as yet believe in the present fulfilment of a wish it seemed almost presumptuous to think of. We may imagine her trembling with the very thought of such a wondrous thing, while, half as a question, and half as accepting the more distant hope as all she might dare to ask for, she says, "I know that he shall "rise again in the resurrection at the last day."

A. D. 30.

25 Jesus said unto her, I am [l] the Resurrection, and the [m] Life: [n] he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

26 and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die. Believest thou this?

27 She saith unto Him, Yea, Lord: [o] I believe that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.

28 And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee.

[l] ch. 5. 21. & 6. 39, 40, 44.
[m] ch. 1. 4. & 6. 35. & 14. 6. Col. 3. 4. 1 John 1. 1, 2. & 5. 11.
[n] ch. 3. 36. 1 John 5. 10, &c.
[o] Mat. 16. 16. ch. 4. 42. & 6. 14, 69.

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25. "I am the Resurrection," &c. In these sublime words our Lord would draw Martha up to higher and truer views of His own Divine nature and power. It is as though He said, 'Thou sayest that 'thy brother shall rise again at the last day. But am not I He who 'shall call him from his grave? And, if I can raise him then, cannot 'I raise him now? Have I not in Myself the power of Resurrection 'and of Life?' And then, lest Martha's thoughts should dwell only on the raising of her brother's body, Jesus adds a comment on His words to show that in their highest sense they apply to a life far above that of the mere body—even to spiritual and eternal life. That life is in Him (See on i. 4.). Nay, He *is* that Life; just as the sun, which pours light and heat on the world, is itself light and heat (See on v. 21.).

"He that believeth" &c. In these words and those of the next verse our Lord divides believers into two classes according to their bodily state. First, here there are those who are dead in body, as was Lazarus. They shall live for ever, because Christ is the Resurrection. Secondly, in the next verse, there are those believers who are alive in body, as was Martha. They shall not die eternally, because Christ is the Life. Thus these two sentences answer to the two titles claimed by our Lord. In that He is the Resurrection, He gives life to the dead. In that He is the Life, He gives life to the living. Mark of how little account in Christ's sight is the life or death of the body. The only life and death worth speaking of are eternal life and death. How fitly are these spirit-stirring words chosen as the first to greet the mourner's ear when he comes to lay the form he has loved, and lost for a little while, in the Church's hallowed ground. Truly they give to our beautiful Burial Service a tone of hope and triumph, and pour a bright ray of heaven's light through the dark cloud of sorrow.

27. "Yea, Lord: I believe" &c. Martha seems to have scarcely understood our Lord's meaning, and yet to have been ready to accept all that was told her concerning Him. She seems to have meant, 'I 'believe that Thou art the Christ, and therefore I believe of Thee 'all that can be said of Christ.'

28. "The Master is come," &c. Plainly Jesus had asked for Mary, —another instance of His human tenderness. This was the first Mary had heard of His coming, and quickly and thankfully she escapes from the poor comforting of her Jewish friends to Him for whom she had longed so intensely.

29 As soon as she heard *that*, she arose quickly, A.D. 30.
and came unto Him.

30 Now Jesus was not yet come into the town,
but was in that place where Martha met Him.

31 [p] The Jews then which were with her in the [p] ver. 19.
house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary,
that she rose up hastily and went out, followed her,
saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there.

32 Then when Mary was come where Jesus was,
and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying
unto Him, [q] Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my [q] ver. 21.
brother had not died.

33 When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and
the Jews also weeping which came with her, He
groaned in the spirit, and [2] was troubled,

[2] Gr. *he troubled himself.*

34 and said, Where have ye laid him? They
said unto Him, Lord, come and see.

35 [r] Jesus wept. [r] Luke 19. 41.

36 Then said the Jews, Behold how He loved
him!

37 And some of them said, Could not this Man,
[s] which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused [s] ch. 9. 6.
that even this man should not have died?

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31. "**The Jews**" &c. Thus were there many witnesses of this most stupendous of Christ's miracles.

32. "**Lord, if Thou hadst been here,**" &c. She too has a lesson to learn, like her sister. Their faith as yet is dim, though true and loving. The centurion who said, "Speak the word only, and my ser-"vant shall be healed" (St. Matt. viii. 8.), saw more clearly.

33. "**He groaned**" &c. The word translated "groaned" signifies the disturbance of mind caused by the sight of any hateful thing. Jesus was troubled at the terrible fruits of sin in the world. He beheld death and misery, and He "groaned in spirit" at the success of Satan's work.

34. "**Where have ye laid him?**" Such a question may surprise us, if we do not bear in mind how completely our Lord laid aside while on earth His Divine omniscience, making Himself very Man, and only exercising His Almighty powers for the good of others (See on ii. 25. and St. Luke viii. 46.).

35. "**Jesus wept.**" He weeps with those that weep. He does not rebuke or despise natural human sorrow. He shares it, and thus sanctifies it. O wondrous love and compassion! Jesus knows what He is about to do, and yet His tears flow at the sight of the sorrow so soon to be turned into joy!

37. "**And some of them said,**" &c. Thus the Jews were divided; some with candid minds watching the Saviour's conduct, and deeply struck with His compassion; others prejudiced against Him, and ready to take the harshest view, and to find any fault they can. The former

A.D. 30. 38 Jesus therefore again groaning in Himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it.

39 Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto Him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been *dead* four days.

40 Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee,
† ver. 4, 23. that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest † see the glory of God?

41 Then they took away the stone *from the place* where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up *His* eyes, and said, Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast heard Me.

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were doubtless those who afterwards "believed" (45.), the latter those who went and told the Pharisees (46.). Probably the mention of opening the eyes of the blind is with reference to the miracle related in chapter ix.

38. "Again groaning" &c. Possibly in part at the wretched unbelief which asked the scornful question of the last verse. There is no need to answer the taunt by word, as our Lord is about to answer it by deed.

"It was a cave," &c. This was the usual mode of burial in the Holy Land. It was in a similar cave, or chamber hewn in the rock, that our Lord was laid (See on St. Matt. xxvii. 60.).

39. "Martha, the sister" &c. These words at first sight convey the notion that St. John is explaining who Martha is, which would be very strange. But in the Greek the order of the words is different, being this,—'The sister of him that was dead, Martha, saith unto Him.' So that really 'Martha' is put in to shew which sister spoke, and the impression given by the order of the words in the English is a wrong one.

"Lord, by this time" &c. Martha's faith, like that of so many feeble servants of Christ, varies at different moments. It is burning more dimly now. She is so intently wrapped up in the actual present scene, and so vividly conscious of that which lies within the tomb, that for the moment she forgets the power of Him who is "the Resurrection and the Life."

40. "Said I not" &c. Thus does Jesus both rebuke and also restore Martha's failing faith. He reminds her of His promise, which she is forgetting. But to what words does He refer? Either generally to His promise, "Thy brother shall rise again" (23.); or to some words in His conversation with her not recorded by St. John; or possibly to His words when the message telling of Lazarus' sickness was first brought to Him, and when He said, "This sickness is . . . for the glory of God" (4.),—words which would doubtless be carried back by the messenger to the sisters in their trouble.

41. "Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast heard Me." Yet there is no mention of any prayer which had been heard. In truth

42 And I knew that Thou hearest Me always: A. D. 30.
but [u] because of the people which stand by I said [u] ch. 12. 30.
it, that they may believe that Thou hast sent Me.
43 And when He thus had spoken, He cried
with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.
44 And he that was dead came forth, bound
hand and foot with graveclothes: and [x] his face [x] ch. 20. 7.
was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto
them, Loose him, and let him go.

"He was heard before He prayed" (*Origen.*). Or rather it was the *will* of Christ, which, being in unison with the Father's will, was heard and accepted.

42. "And I knew" &c. Our Lord's thanksgiving might have been misunderstood. The people might have supposed that His prayers were not always heard, or that He obtained His power to work miracles only by wrestling in fervent prayer with God. So He utters the wonderful words of this verse, possibly in a lower voice, and so as to be heard chiefly by His believing disciples. His meaning is,—'I do 'not thus thank Thee as though I doubted Thy hearing Me always. 'I know that My will is one with Thy will, and that what I work 'Thou workest also. But I spake the word for the sake of this un-'believing people, that they may know that Thou hast sent Me'. The Jews were ready to attribute our Lord's miracles to magic, or the power of Satan, so as to escape from believing that He came from God. His thanksgiving would shew them in whose power He acted. This was the first thing to convince them of, namely that He was sent by God. Christ's prayers and Christ's thanksgivings are not for His needs, but for our instruction.

43. "With a loud voice." So at the last great day "the Lord "Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of "the Archangel, and with the trump of God" (1 Thess. iv. 16.), and "all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth" (v. 28.). The raising of Lazarus was but a forestalling of the general Resurrection of the dead.

44. "He that was dead came forth." With what trembling awe must the by-standers have gazed upon the rising form of Lazarus! The scene must have been awful and affecting beyond all conception. Yet if such was the resurrection of one single man, what will be the resurrection of all mankind!

"Bound hand and foot." Yet seemingly not so closely as to prevent motion; though some look upon the coming forth of Lazarus while still so bound as itself miraculous.

"Loose him." The same power which called forth the dead could have at the same time loosed him from the bonds of his grave-clothes, and have caused them to be left, even as His own were but a little afterwards, lying in the tomb. But the handling and the loosing would better than anything else convince the spectators of the reality of the miracle, and prove to them (as He allowed the Apostles to prove to themselves in His own case) that it was he himself, and no mere spirit or appearance.

A.D. 30. 45 Then many of the Jews which came to Mary,
y ch. 2. 23. & 10. 42. & 12. 11, 18. [y] and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on Him.

46 ¶ But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done.

z Ps. 2. 2. Matt. 26. 3. Mark 14. 1. Luke 22. 2. 47 [z] Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, [a] What do we? for this
a ch. 12. 19. Acts 4. 16. Man doeth many miracles.

Before leaving this stupendous miracle, we must pause to reflect upon its spiritual meaning. Like other miracles, this may most fitly be turned into a great parable. The resurrection of the body to natural life is a simple emblem and picture of the restoration of the soul to spiritual life. As the Lord had power over natural death in all its stages (See on St. Matt. ix. 25.), so has He power over spiritual death in all its stages. And, as Jairus' daughter and the widow of Nain's son may represent souls but newly fallen away, so Lazarus may represent one more deeply sunk in sin, and bound in the bonds of spiritual death. From such a state the voice of Jesus alone can call the sinner forth. The dead *in sin* may "hear the voice of the "Son of God: and they that hear shall live." And, as Jesus, after giving life to the frame, did not Himself loose the bonds of the grave-clothes from Lazarus, but bade others set him free, so does He even now commit to human hands the "ministry of reconciliation", suffering His earthly ministers to apply to the penitent sinner the comfort of that loosing which comes alone from Himself (See on St. Matt. ix. 8. and St. John xx. 23.).

45. "Then many of the Jews" &c. Thus was the miracle, as our Lord foretold, "for the glory of God" (4.). Did we not know the terrible hardness of the human heart, and the obstinate blindness of those who will not see, we might well marvel that what is here said of many of the Jews is not said of all.

46—57. The effect of the Miracle, and the Council of the Jews.

46. "But some of them" &c. Plainly these went in enmity to our Lord. His miracle divided the multitude, stirring up the newly kindled faith of many, but also stirring up the bitter enmity of others. "The thoughts of many hearts" were now "revealed" (St. Luke ii. 35.). This obstinate blindness and unbelief might well astonish us, had not our Lord Himself prophesied of such,—"Neither will they be per-"suaded, though one rose from the dead" (St. Luke xvi. 31.). We need not suppose these men doubted the truth of the miracle itself, any more than the Council doubted it when reported to them (See 47.): only it failed to persuade them that Jesus was the Messiah. They probably ascribed it to witchcraft or Satanic power.

47. "This Man doeth many miracles." The enemies of our Lord cannot deny this great fact. It was too plain and certain. Nor do

48 If we let Him thus alone, all *men* will believe on Him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation. A.D. 30.

49 And one of them, *named* [b] Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, [b] Luke 3. 2. ch. 18. 14. Acts 4. 6.

50 [c] nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one Man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. [c] ch. 18. 14.

51 And this spake he not of himself: but being

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they care to find an explanation for it. They think only of themselves, and how our Lord's popularity would affect their own power.

48. "All men will believe on Him." Their fears came to pass, for we find in the next chapter the Pharisees saying among themselves, "Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? Behold, the world is "gone after Him" (xii. 19.).

"The Romans shall come" &c. The chief priests and Pharisees feared—or pretended to fear—that our Lord, when He found the people convinced of His miraculous power, and ready to follow Him, would set Himself up as king, and defy the Roman power. It is wonderful that the very thing they here speak of with fear actually came to pass about forty years later as a punishment to themselves for not believing in Christ, God bringing the Roman armies as His instruments for the destruction of His rebellious and unbelieving people (See St. Luke xx. 15, 16.). By "place" here may be meant either the Temple, or the city of Jerusalem.

49. "Caiaphas, being the high priest". &c. Caiaphas was high priest for about eleven years, having succeeded his father-in-law Annas. The office of the high-priesthood was really for life, but the Romans frequently interfered, setting up their own favourites and expelling those who displeased them (See on xviii. 13, 14. and St. Luke iii. 2.).

"Ye know nothing at all." Thus scornfully does this bold and bad man denounce the weak fears and halting counsels of the rest. It is as though he said, 'Ye are all blind, and cannot see that the only 'safe course is to get rid of this Man altogether.'

50. "It is expedient for us." This is the whole ground and motive of his horrible advice. He cared not for right or wrong. He had none of the hesitation in doing an act of downright murder which the rest seem to have felt. "It is expedient" He should die. That is enough for him. We see the same unscrupulous and bloodthirsty character in the after conduct of Caiaphas when our Lord was brought before him (See St. Matt. xxvi. 59, 62, 65—68.). How marvellous that words so cruel and unworthy should announce a truth so great and blessed!

51. "This spake he not of himself:" &c. No doubt Caiaphas was ignorant of the exercise of any will but his own in the utterance of his words. Yet St. John declares that God employed him, as it were, to utter them, that they might be a distinct prophecy (though unknown to the speaker) of the Redemption of the world by the death

A.D. 30. high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation;

d Isai. 49. 6. 1 John 2. 2. e ch. 10. 16. Eph. 2. 14, 15, 16, 17.

52 and [d] not for that nation only, [e] but that also He should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.

53 Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put Him to death.

f ch. 4. 1, 3. & 7. 1.

54 Jesus [f] therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went thence unto a country

g See 2 Chr. 13. 19.

near to the wilderness, into a city called [g] Ephraim,

h ch. 2. 13. & 5. 1. & 6. 4.

and there continued with His disciples.

55 [h] And the Jews' passover was nigh at hand:

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of Christ. We can hardly help being reminded of Balaam's unwilling prophecies. God often uses bad men to work out His purposes, and brings good out of evil. But Balaam understood his own words, even though he spoke them unwillingly. Caiaphas did not understand his. This is wonderful, and yet even the prophets of old by no means fully understood their own prophecies, as St. Peter expressly declares (1 St. Peter i. 10, 11.). Archbishop Trench well compares with the unconscious prophecy of Caiaphas the writing which Pilate set up over the Cross, and the mocking homage, the robe and sceptre and crown, of the Roman soldiers, as unintentional witnesses to great truths. Man knew not the meaning of his own acts. God meant them to be prophecies and witnesses. We must not omit to observe that it was *as being High-priest* that Caiaphas was chosen by God to make this wonderful prophecy. God honoured the sacred office which man dishonoured (See on St. Matt. xxiii. 2, 3.).

52. "Not for that nation only," &c. This is not part of the meaning of Caiaphas' words, but St. John's own addition. Caiaphas spoke of Christ's death saving the Jewish people. St. John says, 'Yes, 'and not that nation only, but all the world.'

"Gather together in one." It was a loving fancy of the very earliest Christian writers which made the outstretched Arms of Jesus upon the Cross signify the loving embrace in which He would "gather "together" both Jews and Gentiles in one. By "the children of "God" here is meant all those who should by grace be elected into His great family—the Church of the living God. So when Christ says, "Other sheep I have" (x. 16.), He speaks of those who should afterwards become His sheep.

54. "Ephraim." The exact spot where this city stood is not known. It was probably a small town in the wild hill-country north-east of Jerusalem, in the direction of Jericho, and on the west side of the Jordan. Since this was still within Judæa, we must understand by "the Jews" in this verse the Jews of Jerusalem, or perhaps the Chief Priests and Pharisees, who had resolved upon, and sought to bring about, our Lord's destruction.

55. "The Jews' passover." That glorious and blessed season when "Christ our Passover" was "sacrificed for us" (1 Cor. v. 7.), thenceforth the season dearest of all the year to Christian hearts. For what

and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the passover, to purify themselves. A.D. 30.

56 [i]Then sought they for Jesus, and spake among themselves, as they stood in the temple, What think ye, that He will not come to the feast? [i] ch. 7. 11.

57 Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that, if any man knew where He were, he should shew *it*, that they might take Him.

CHAPTER XII.

1 *Jesus excuseth Mary anointing His feet.* 9 *The people flock to see Lazarus.* 10 *The high priests consult to kill Him.* 12 *Christ rideth into Jerusalem.* 20 *Greeks desire to see Jesus:* 23 *He foretelleth His death.* 37 *The Jews are generally blinded:* 42 *yet many chief rulers believe, but do not confess Him:* 44 *therefore Jesus calleth earnestly for confession of faith.*

THEN Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, [a]where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom He raised from the dead. [a] ch. 11. 1, 43.

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so full both of deepest awe and of holiest gladness as the solemn Fast of Passion-tide, and the triumphant Feast of Easter?

"To purify themselves." As the Law of Moses commanded after any defilement (See Num. ix. 6—10. xix. 11, 12. xxxi. 19. 2 Chron. xxx. 17—19.). Let us see to it that we purify ourselves by true repentance and humiliation from the defilement of sin, if we would fitly keep our feast. This purification before the Passover is "like the "Lent which precedes Easter, in order to give us eyes to discern "Christ crucified" (*Is. Williams.*).

56. "What think ye," &c. Our Lord's constant habit of attending the great feasts at Jerusalem, thus marking His approval of the observance of holy seasons, made His presence expected at this time. Men were naturally desirous to see Him, but probably the anxious enquiries as to the probability of His coming arose chiefly from the knowledge of the command named in the next verse.

CHAPTER XII.

1—8. The Anointing at Bethany.

St. Matt. xxvi. 6—13. St. Mark xiv. 3—9.

1. "Six days before the Passover." We now come to the great week, in which our Lord's work on earth is crowned and perfected. Every least event, and every least saying, of this holy week is indeed most precious. St. John accordingly devotes nearly half his Gospel to the record of these last most sacred days. The day here named was the Sabbath (Saturday) before the Crucifixion,—the day before

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1. "*Six days before the Passover.*" Concerning the time of this event see *Note* on St. Matt. xxi. 1., and concerning the differences between St. John's account and those of St. Matthew and St. Mark see *Note* on St. Matt. xxvi. 6.

A. D. 30. 2 There they made Him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with Him.

b Luke 10. 38, 39. ch. 11. 2. 3 Then took [b] Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.

4 Then saith one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's *son*, which should betray Him,

5 Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?

6 This he said, not that he cared for the poor; c ch. 13. 29. but because he was a thief, and [c] had the bag, and bare what was put therein.

Palm-Sunday. Jesus no longer seeks retirement. His hour is come, and He draws nigh to Jerusalem. Bethany was scarcely two miles from Jerusalem, the Mount of Olives lying between (See on St. Matt. xxi. 1.).

2. "**A supper.**" In the house of Simon the leper, as we learn from the other Gospels.

"**Martha served.**" As on another occasion (See St. Luke x. 40.), her active busy disposition leading her thus to shew her love.

"**Lazarus**" &c. We can well imagine that Lazarus would be an honoured guest. Surely one raised, as he had been, from the dead, would be regarded with singular awe and reverence.

3. "**Then took Mary**" &c. Only from St. John do we learn that this loving act was done by Mary, She who once sat at Jesus' feet, having chosen the better part, again gives proof of her loving devotion by this pious act. St. John alone records her anointing of our Lord's *Feet*, and her wiping them with her hair,—all springing from the fulness of her love and humility.

"**The house was filled**" &c. "Not that house only, but the uni-"versal Church of Christ, has been filled with the fragrance of her "action" (*Burgon.*).

4. "**Judas Iscariot.**" Again St. John alone gives the name of the murmurer. And yet it is remarkable that this very fact—namely that the murmurings were those of the traitor—probably accounts for the place in which St. Matthew and St. Mark have related this history, putting it in immediately before the betrayal. St. John here connects the betrayal with these murmurings by the words, "which should betray Him",—implying that the besetting sin which so soon led to this awful crime was even now showing itself in the words of the traitor.

6. "**He was a thief,**" &c. The secret heart of the traitor is here laid bare for us by the Evangelist, and we behold the besetting sin, which, already his master, led him in a few days more to his awful end. Yet, as no sin is ever single, so was not the covetousness of Judas his only sin. Here indeed was the root, yet from this same root grew not only its natural outgrowth—theft, but also unbelief, and hypocrisy, and ingratitude. A thief among the Apostles! Yes, for

7 Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of My burying hath she kept this. A.D. 30.
8 For the poor always ye have with you; but Me ye have not always.

9 ¶ Much people of the Jews therefore knew that He was there: and they came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, [d] whom He had raised from the dead. [d] ch. 11. 43, 44.
10 [e] But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death; [e] Luke 16. 31.
11 [f] because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus. [f] ver. 18. ch. 11. 45.

12 ¶ On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,
13 took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet Him, and cried, **Hosanna: Blessed *is* the King of Israel that cometh in the Name of the Lord.** Ps. 118. 25, 26.
14 And Jesus, when He had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written,
15 **Fear not, daughter of Sion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt.** Zech. 9. 9.

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there is no place so sacred as to shut out sin, nor any privileges so great as to ensure holiness (See on vi. 70.).

9—11. The Jews come to Bethany to see Jesus and Lazarus.

9. "They came" &c. "Curiosity brought them; not love" (*St. Augustine*), and yet many, when they saw Jesus, and Lazarus whom He had raised from the dead, could doubt no longer, and became believers.

10. "The chief priests consulted" &c. "O foolish thought, and "blind rage! If the Lord Jesus had power to raise him when dead, "had He not power to raise him when slain? Behold, the Lord did "both: both Lazarus, who was dead, and Himself, who was slain, "He raised to life again" (*St. Augustine*). We can hardly doubt that these Chief Priests, being probably Sadducees, did not believe that Lazarus had been raised from the dead. If they had believed it, it would be almost incredible that they should have sought to kill him.

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14. "*When He had found.*" The *manner* of the finding is related in the other Gospels. The whole story is given very briefly, and as one already well known to his readers, by St. John.

A. D. 30.

16 These things [g] understood not His disciples at the first: [h] but when Jesus was glorified, [i] then remembered they that these things were written of Him, and *that* they had done these things unto Him.

17 The people therefore that was with Him when He called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead, bare record.

18 [k] For this cause the people also met Him, for that they heard that He had done this miracle.

19 The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, [l] Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after Him.

20 ¶ And there [m] were certain Greeks among them [n] that came up to worship at the feast:

21 the same came therefore to Philip, [o] which was

[g] Luke 18. 34.
[h] ch. 7. 39.
[i] ch. 14. 26.
[k] ver. 11.
[l] ch. 11. 47, 48.
[m] Acts 17. 4.
[n] 1 Kings 8. 41, 42. Acts 8. 27.
[o] ch. 1. 44.

12—19. The Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem.

St. Matt. xxi. 1—11. St. Mark xi. 1—11. St. Luke xix. 28—40.

16. "When Jesus was glorified." This plainly refers to the gift of the Holy Ghost on the Day of Pentecost. According to our Lord's own promise, that Holy Spirit taught them all things, and brought all things to their remembrance which He had spoken to them (See xiv. 26.). Amongst other teaching, this Divine Guide revealed to their understandings the true meaning and fulfilment of prophecy.

17. "Bare record." They "began to rejoice and praise God with "a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen" (St. Luke.).

18. "The people." Those who had seen the stupendous miracle of the resurrection of Lazarus spread abroad the news, and this their report caused the multitude to flock out of Jerusalem to meet Him who had done this wondrous work.

19. "The world is gone after Him." Yes; and the world will go after Christ now, so far as to carry palms and to sing Hosannas. But when will the world's *heart* go after Him?

20—36. Certain Greeks ask to see Jesus. His discourse on the occasion.

20. "Certain Greeks." That is, Gentiles, for the Jews often called all foreigners 'Greeks', these being the most important of foreign nations to them. These Greeks were probably proselytes, or converts to the Jewish faith (See on St. Matt. xxiii. 15.), since they had come to Jerusalem for the Passover.

21. "To Philip." We cannot tell why these Greeks applied to Philip. He may have been known to some among them, or, as some think, his name, which is Greek, may imply some connection with Greeks.

of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, A.D. 30.
Sir, we would see Jesus.

22 Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again
Andrew and Philip tell Jesus.

23 And Jesus answered them, saying, [p] The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.

24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, [q] Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

25 [r] He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he

[p] ch. 13. 32. & 17. 1.
[q] 1 Cor. 15. 36.
[r] Mat. 10. 39. & 16. 25. Mark 8. 35. Luke 9. 24. & 17. 33.

"Sir, we would see Jesus." They doubtless desired a private interview with Jesus, for He could be seen publicly every day.

22. **"Andrew,"** who was a fellow-townsman with Philip. The latter seems to have doubted whether our Lord would receive these Gentiles, and so took counsel with his brother Apostle.

23. **"Jesus answered them,"** &c. We do not read that He either granted or refused the request. It seems however probable that the Greeks followed the two Apostles to Jesus, and that He spoke the following discourse in their hearing. It is remarkable that Gentiles come to see our Lord at the close of His earthly life, as Gentiles came at its opening. "These men from the West, at the end of Christ's "life, answer to the wise men from the East at its beginning; but the "one came to the Cross of the King, the other to His Manger" (*Stier.*).

"The hour is come," &c. Our Saviour seems to mean, 'These 'Greeks have come at the very time to be witnesses of My glory,' By His glory our Lord plainly means His Death, for by and through Death He was glorified. But as the next verse, speaking about "fruit", shews, He had a farther meaning in His words. For by dying He was to gather together in Himself all nations, and this ingathering of the nations would be one way in which He would be glorified. "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me" (32.). Christ had just made His triumphal entry into the city, and many thought, 'Now He is about to reveal His power and glory, and to reign 'as king over His people.' It was not thus He was to be glorified.

24. **"It abideth alone."** That is, without fruit or increase. Christ compares Himself to the grain of corn. The grain by dying (as it were) in the ground brings forth much fruit. Christ by dying wins a rich harvest of souls. So it is written, "When Thou shalt make His "soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong "His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His Hand" (Is. liii. 10.).

25. **"He that loveth"** &c. This is a frequent saying of our Lord, being used by Him on several occasions (See St. Matt. x. 39. xvi. 25. St. Luke ix. 24. xvii. 33.), and probably many more times than are recorded. It is one of the great laws of His kingdom. Here no doubt it is spoken to show the disciples and the Greeks who were listening to our Lord, that, even as the Master was to be glorified by dying, so for the servant there is no other rule. Self-sacrifice is the door to eternal life. He that loves and pampers and indulges his life here loses his life hereafter: he that renounces the indulgences of his carnal life here, gains

A.D. 30. that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.

[r] ch. 14. 3. & 17. 24. 1 Thess. 4. 17. [s] 26 If any man serve Me, let him follow Me; and [s] where I am, there shall also My servant be: if any man serve Me, him will *My* Father honour.

[t] Matt. 26. 38, 39. Luke 12. 50. ch. 13. 21. [u] Luke 22. 53. ch. 18. 37. 27 [t] Now is My soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour: [u] but for this cause came I unto this hour.

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that which alone deserves the name of life hereafter. "A life of self-"denial here will lengthen out into an eternity of glory and blessed-"ness" (*P. Young.*).

26. "If any man serve Me," &c. The same thought is continued in this verse. 'My servants must follow Me in My path of self-'sacrifice.' The Greeks, who perhaps sought to see Christ from curiosity, having heard of the excitement caused by His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, now learn the terms of discipleship. Let us hope they had grace to take up their cross and follow Him.

"Where I am," &c. Not in glory alone, but also in suffering: not in victory alone, but also in conflict: not in life alone, but also in death: not on the throne alone, but also on the cross. The faithful servant will walk in his Master's footsteps, in whatsoever path they tread, and such will God the Father "honour", glorifying him even as He glorifies His own Son.

27. "Now is My soul troubled." A sudden and awful change passes over our Lord's words. This is truly a foretaste of Gethsemane. There is the same trouble and amazement of soul; the same cry for deliverance; the same entire resignation to His Father's will. Now, as then, the Human Nature of Christ, perfectly human in all but sin, is mightily shewn forth. It is worth noting that while the other Evangelists describe Gethsemane, St. John alone records this first flash of the storm which then passed over the Son of God, while concerning that fearful scene itself he is silent.

"What shall I say?" "The horror of death and the ardour of "obedience were contending in our Lord" (*Bengel*). Each sought to express itself. But they could not both be expressed together. Therefore He exclaims, "What shall I say?" And therefore He gives utterance to the two feelings separately, first to the "horror of death" in this verse, and then to the "ardour of obedience" in the next.

"Save Me from this hour." This is the voice of the "horror of "death." The "hour" can be none other than that of His Crucifixion. Yet this cry does not so much ask for escape *from* the terrors of that hour, as for deliverance *out of* it. It is literally, 'Save—or deliver—Me '*out of* this hour,' which would mean, 'Carry Me safely through its 'agonies.'

"But for this cause" &c. For what cause? Surely that He might endure its anguish. Why had He placed the cup to His Lips save that He might drink it to the dregs? It is as though the cry, "Father, "if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me" (St. Matt. xxvi. 39.) were instantly followed by, "The cup which My Father hath given Me, "shall I not drink it?" (xviii. 11.).

28 Father, glorify Thy name. [x] Then came there a voice from heaven, *saying*, I have both glorified *it*, and will glorify *it* again. A.D. 30. [x] Matt. 3. 17.

29 The people therefore, that stood by, and heard *it*, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to Him.

30 Jesus answered and said, [y] This voice came not because of Me, but for your sakes. [y] ch. 11. 42. [x] Matt. 12. 27. Luke 10. 18. ch. 14. 30. & 16. 11. Acts 26. 18. 2 Cor. 4. 4. Eph. 2. 2. & 6. 12.

31 Now is the judgment of this world: now shall [z] the prince of this world be cast out.

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28. "Father, glorify Thy name." This is the voice of the "ardour "of obedience."—"Glorify Thy name" by fulfilling Thy will,—answering to the "Not My will, but Thine, be done" of Gethsemane. Behold the Son praying that the Father's Name might be glorified through His Passion and Death! Through these alone He knew man could be saved, God's kingdom be established in the world, and thus His Name be hallowed and glorified. When we pray "Hallowed be "Thy Name", are we willing that this should be, if need be, through our own suffering?

"I have both glorified it," &c. God had glorified His Name by all the evidences He had given of Christ's Divine nature and power, by the marvels at His Birth, by the Voice at His Baptism and Transfiguration, and by all His mighty works, among which the Raising of Lazarus would be fresh in the people's thoughts. He was about to glorify His Name again by the marvels of Christ's Death and Resurrection and Ascension, but chiefly by His Death (See on 31, 32.).

29. "Said that it thundered." See how faithfully the Evangelist records even the doubts of the people to the reality of this Voice,—a signal proof of truthfulness. "If the Evangelists had wished to "deceive, they might perhaps have said that thunder was a voice "from heaven to Christ, but they would never have related that any "one said that a Voice to Christ was thunder" (*Wordsworth.*). We may suppose that to the Apostles at least the Voice was clear and distinct. Even among the dull multitude some fancied the sound more like an Angel's voice than thunder. It has been well noted upon this passage how differently to different persons the Voice of God sounds according to the state of the heart and the keenness of the spiritual hearing.

30. "This voice came" &c. As at the tomb of Lazarus Christ declares His own words spoken to the Father to be for the sake of the by-standers (See xi. 42.), so now He declares the Father's words spoken to Him to be for their sake. How full of awe must this whole scene have been to those Greek strangers who now first heard and saw Jesus!

31. "Now is the judgment" &c. "Now"—for Christ has before His mind a vision of the coming triumph. This and the next verse declare the way in which God would glorify His Name. By "judg-"ment" is meant condemnation, and by "this world" is meant the wicked and unbelieving,—those who are the true subjects of the prince of this world. For such the Cross of Christ brings only condemnation. We may mark how the Cross of Christ has, like a magnet, a two-

A.D. 30.

32 And I, [a] if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw [b] all *men* unto Me.

33 [c] This He said, signifying what death He should die.

34 The people answered Him, [d] We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest Thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man?

35 Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while

[a] ch. 3. 14. & 8. 28.
[b] Rom. 5. 18. Heb. 2. 9.
[c] ch. 18. 32.
[d] Ps. 89. 36, 37. & 110. 4. Isai. 9. 7. & 53. 8. Ezek. 37. 25. Dan. 2. 44. & 7. 14, 27. Micah 4. 7.

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fold power, of repelling and attracting. To some it is the "savour "of death unto death"; to others the "savour of life unto life" (2 Cor. ii. 16.). In the verse we see its repelling power: in the next its attractive power. And, as the subjects of Satan's kingdom are condemned, so is he himself "cast out"—cast out of his kingdom and power. In the Death of Christ is the great overcoming and spoiling of the "strong man armed" (St. Luke xi. 21.). True, his power was already lessened (See on St. Luke x. 18.), but now it must receive its deathblow. Now must the Seed of the woman bruise the serpent's head. Henceforth not only is Satan robbed of his frightful power over the persons of men (See on St. Matt. viii. 28.), but also of his power to hold captive their souls. Man is *redeemed*, bought back from Satan's dominion, by the precious Blood of the Atonement. Henceforth a limit is set upon his power. Man, through grace, is his master. "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (St. James iv. 7. See also on xvi. 11.).

32. "And I," &c. Here is the attraction of the Cross. We learn from the next verse that "lifted up from the earth" signifies 'crucified.' The meaning then is, 'When I am raised up on the cross, 'I will draw all men unto Me.' But how will Christ draw? Partly by the very love begotten by the sight of His marvellous Sacrifice, but partly also by the drawing of that Holy Spirit, which He purchased for us by His death. By "all men" our Lord means men of all nations and of all times. Thus the Greeks, who asked to see Christ, receive their answer. 'Ye would see Me, and know Me', our Lord would say, 'and ye shall see and know Me; for presently I shall hang 'upon the Cross, lifted up from the earth, and then I will draw you, 'and all who will, into My fold.' There is indeed a sense in which Christ may be said to draw literally "*all men*", for He calls and invites and attracts all men, and it is not because He does not draw, but because they will not be drawn, that so many come not to Him.

34. "We have heard" &c. The eternity of Christ's kingdom is very plainly declared in the Old Testament (See Isai. ix. 7. Dan. vii. 14.); and so little could the Jews believe it possible that Christ should die, that they began to doubt whether our Lord was really speaking of *Christ* when He said, "The Son of man must be lifted up." Could it be that He was speaking of some other "Son of man", and not the Messiah?

35. "Yet a little while" &c. Christ does not answer the people's

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32. "*If I be lifted up.*" For the force of the "If" here see on xiii. 32.

[e] is the light with you. [f] Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for [g] he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. A.D. 30.

[e] ver. 46. ch. 1. 9. & 8. 12. & 9. 5.

36 While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be [h] the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and [i] did hide Himself from them.

[f] Jer. 13. 16. Eph. 5. 8. [g] ch. 11. 10. 1 John 2. 11. [h] Luke 16. 8. Eph. 5. 8. 1 Thess. 5. 5. 1 John 2. 9, 10, 11.

37 ¶ But though He had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on Him:

[i] ch. 8. 59. & 11. 54.

38 that the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, [k] **Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?** Isaiah 53. 1.

[k] Rom. 10. 16.

39 Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again,

40 [l] **He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened**

[l] Matt. 13. 14.

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question about the Son of man. Probably they would not have received the truth, if He had told them. He merely gives them a parting warning of the shortness of the time which remained, and in which they might come to the Light and be saved. By the Light we can scarcely doubt that Jesus meant Himself (See on i. 9. viii. 12.). If only they would open their eyes to the true Light, they would soon see the answer to their question, and beneath that Light the mists of ignorance and falsehood would pass away.

"**Walk.**" That is, Arise, and bestir yourselves. Look to your footsteps, and seek the true path, while you can. Alas! how are the Jewish people, who would not have the Light, wandering now in darkness, knowing not whither they go!

36. "**Did hide Himself.**" Retiring to the mount of Olives, or perhaps to Bethany (See on St. Luke xxi. 37.).

37—50. The unbelief of the Jews.

37. "**Though He had done**" &c. At Nazareth Christ could do no mighty work "because of their unbelief" (See on St. Mark vi. 5.). Here in Jerusalem He does many miracles, yet they believe not. Perhaps the unbelief of the Nazarenes was more settled and obstinate, as well as more universal. In Jerusalem some at least believed; and many half believed (See 42.).

38. "**Lord, who hath believed**" &c. That is, 'How few there are 'who have believed the message of God's prophets: how few to whom 'the power of the Lord has been made known!'

40. "**He hath blinded**" &c. St. John, having quoted from the beginning of the fifty-third chapter, now quotes from the sixth, giving

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38. "*That the saying*" &c. See on St. Matt. i. 22.

A.D. 30. **their heart; that they should not see with *their* eyes, nor understand with *their* heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.** Isai. 6. 9.

m Isai. 6. 1. 41 [m] These things said Esaias, when he saw His glory, and spake of Him.

42 Nevertheless among the chief rulers also

n ch. 7. 13. & 9. 22. many believed on Him; but [n] because of the Pharisees they did not confess *Him*, lest they should be put out of the synagogue:

o ch. 5. 44. 43 [o] for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

p Mark 9. 37. 1 Pet. 1. 21. 44 Jesus cried and said, [p] He that believeth on Me, believeth not on Me, but on Him that sent Me.

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the sense rather than the exact words. This *judicial* blindness—blindness, that is, sent as a judgment upon those who *would not* see—was the reason why these Jews *could not* see. God blinds and hardens, when He withdraws His light and His grace from those who have despised and rejected them (See on St. Matt. xiii. 15.).

41. "When he saw His glory." That is, the wonderful vision of the Lord Jehovah sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, while the Seraphin cried one to another, "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord "of Hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory" (Isai. vi. 3.). St. John here says that it was *Christ*, whose glory the prophet saw; a remarkable testimony to His Divinity.

42. "They did not confess Him." These were then but half-believers, else they would have been willing to confess Christ before men. How much of the inconsistency and unworthy conduct of professing Christians springs from the root here laid bare—the loving the praise of men more than the praise of God! We can hardly suppose that St. John is thinking of such timid disciples as Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathæa in this place, though it was true that they did not confess Christ. He seems rather to be thinking of others who, convinced in understanding, yet refused from unworthy motives to yield their hearts to Christ.

44. "Jesus cried and said." When was this? The words following appear like a continuation of the previous discourse, yet that was plainly ended (See 36.). Some think what follows was spoken on another day during the same solemn week. Others (perhaps with more probability) think that St. John, having mentioned the unbelief of the Jews, confirms his words by bringing forward our Lord's own testimony on the subject, giving a summary of His doctrine, gathered from many discourses rather than uttered at any one time. Thus the opening words of this verse would mean, 'In like manner Jesus Himself con-'tinually spake, saying'—

"He that believeth" &c. Christ sets forth the guilt of unbelief by showing that to believe on Him is to believe on the Father who sent Him, so that to reject Him is to reject the Father who sent Him.

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42. "*Put out of the synagogue.*" See on ix. 22.

45 And [q] he that seeth Me seeth Him that sent Me. A.D. 30.

46 [r] I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on Me should not abide in darkness.

47 And if any man hear My words, and believe not, [s] I judge him not: for [t] I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.

48 [u] He that rejecteth Me, and receiveth not My words, hath one that judgeth him: [x] the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.

49 For [y] I have not spoken of Myself; but the Father which sent Me, He gave Me a commandment, [z] what I should say, and what I should speak.

50 And I know that His commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto Me, so I speak.

[q] ch. 14. 9.

[r] ver. 35, 36. ch. 3. 19. & 8. 12. & 9. 5, 39.

[s] ch. 5. 45. & 8. 15, 26.

[t] ch. 3. 17.

[u] Luke 10. 16.

[x] Deut. 18. 19. Mark 16. 16.

[y] ch. 8. 38. & 14. 10.

[z] Deut. 18. 18.

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45. "He that seeth" &c. So perfect is the Unity of the Father and the Son in the One Godhead (For a fuller comment see on xiv. 9.).

47. "I judge him not." That is, not now. It would not have been true to say, 'I will not judge him'; for Christ will judge all men at His second coming.

48. "Hath one that judgeth him:" &c. That is, 'hath a judge 'to judge him.' And this judge is Christ's own word spoken to him. It is this, our Lord says, which will rise up against him, and condemn him. The same truth is uttered again in the night of the Betrayal, when our Lord says of His enemies, "If I had not come and spoken "unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for "their sin" (xv. 22.).

49. "He gave Me a commandment," &c. Thus does the Son acknowledge the Father as the Fountain of all truth and wisdom. As Man, Jesus was in all things obedient to the Father's commands, being "inferior to the Father as touching His Manhood": as God, though He is "equal to the Father as touching His Godhead", yet is He the eternal Word (See i. 1.), deriving eternally His wisdom from the Father, as a stream from a fountain, and in the Incarnation revealing that wisdom to man (See on v. 18, 19.).

50. "His commandment is life everlasting." That is, to every one who will receive and obey it. "The commandment" says St. Paul "was ordained to life" (Rom. vii. 10.). This was true from the beginning, though through the sinfulness and weakness of man's fallen nature it was "found to be unto death." Now however, since Christ has won for us new gifts of grace, "the righteousness of the law" is "fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Rom. viii. 4.), and Christians, justified through the Atonement, sanctified by the Holy Spirit, and washed from their transgressions by the Blood of the Cross, find that God's "commandment is life everlasting."

A.D. 30.

CHAPTER XIII.

1 *Jesus washeth the disciples' feet: exhorteth them to humility and charity.* 18 *He foretelleth, and discovereth to John by a token, that Judas should betray Him:* 31 *commandeth them to love one another,* 36 *and forewarneth Peter of his denial.*

a Matt. 26. 2.
b ch. 12. 23. & 17. 1, 11.

NOW [a] before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that [b] His hour was come that He should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end.

c ver. 27. Luke 22. 3.
d Matt. 11. 27. & 28. 18. ch. 3. 35. & 17. 2. Acts 2. 36. 1 Cor. 15. 27. Heb. 2. 8.
e ch. 3. 42. & 16. 28.

2 And supper being ended, [c] the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's *son*, to betray Him;

3 Jesus knowing [d] that the Father had given all things into His hands, and [e] that He was come from God, and went to God;

CHAPTER XIII.

1—20. The Washing of the Apostles' feet.

1. "**Before the feast.**" That is, just immediately before. These words seem to belong closely to the words "He riseth from supper" (4.), and mark the time of the act there described.

"**That He should depart.**" Not that He was actually to return to the Father until forty-three days were past, but the last great scenes of His earthly sojourn were at hand.

"**Unto the end.**" This should be 'to the uttermost.' The near approach of the awful events of the Passion, and the prospect of His return to the glory which He had before the worlds were made, could not lessen Christ's love for His own. On the contrary, it only deepened and intensified that love. Even on the Cross He cares for His murderers, for the dying thief, for His desolate mother. And now He is about to give a proof of His surpassing love in the washing of His disciples' feet.

2. "**Supper being ended.**" This is not a correct translation. St. John's words mean, 'When supper-time had arrived', or perhaps only 'Supper 'having been served.' It is plain that the Washing of the feet took place at the beginning, not at the end, of the feast.

"**The devil having now**" &c. This means, 'The devil having '*already*' done so, for the bargain with the Chief Priests was already made, and Judas now only sought opportunity to carry out his wicked purpose (See on 27.). This is said as making the love and condescension of the Saviour in the act which follows still more marvellous, for He scorned not to perform His lowly service even to the hateful Judas. We know nothing of Simon the father of the traitor. Simon was one of the commonest Jewish names.

3. "**Knowing that the Father**" &c. Again this is to exalt the

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1. "*When Jesus*" *&c.* From these words to the end of verse 3 may be read in a parenthesis. Concerning the day of the Paschal feast see *Note* on St. Matt. xxvi. 17, and as to the order of events see *Notes* on St. Luke xxii. 21–30.

4 [f]He riseth from supper, and laid aside His garments; and took a towel, and girded Himself. A.D. 30.
5 After that He poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe *them* with the towel wherewith He was girded.
6 Then cometh He to Simon Peter: and [2]Peter saith unto Him, Lord, [g]dost Thou wash my feet?
7 Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; [h]but thou shalt know hereafter.
8 Peter saith unto Him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, [i]If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me.

[f] Luke 22. 27. Phil. 2. 7, 8.
[2] Gr. *he.*
[g] See Matt. 3. 14.
[h] ver. 12.
[i] ch. 3. 5. 1 Cor. 6. 11. Eph. 5. 26. Titus 3. 5. Heb. 10. 22.

Saviour's love and humility. With His throne and kingly power full in view, with the consciousness of His speedy return to the Father clear within Him, He yet loves His own, and yet humbles Himself to wash their feet. Mark how what would be faith in us is in Him *knowledge*. He *knows* His coming glory. It is to Him a certainty. Yet behold what follows!

4. "He riseth from supper," &c. How vividly would the Evangelist recall the wonderful scene! Indeed every event of this great night must have been stamped indelibly upon the memory of each one who witnessed it. The sudden rising from the table, the laying aside of His loose outer garments, the girding Himself with the towel,—how must the Apostles have watched each act with deep wonder. He, their Lord and Master, is making Himself their servant! Truly He "made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, . . and "being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself" (Phil. ii. 7, 8.).

6. "Then cometh He" &c. It seems that at first in silence and reverence they suffered our Lord to begin. But the ardent eager Peter could not accept his Lord's lowly act in silence. We cannot blame his words, for they are words of humility; yet it would have been humbler perhaps to have bowed in silence to his Master's will.

7. "What I do" &c. That is, its true meaning, and spiritual teaching. Alford well points out that what is here implied is, 1. The Washing itself, as a lesson of humility and love. 2. Its spiritual meaning. 3. The great act of love, of which it was a picture,—namely, Christ's laying aside of His glory, and becoming in the form of a servant, that the Holy Spirit might cleanse men. The first of these was known very soon, for Christ Himself explained it (See 14.). The second and third were not fully seen till after the Spirit was given at Pentecost.

8. "Thou shalt never" &c. Now St. Peter's eager heart betrays him into a too vehement opposition to his Lord. He is scarcely humble in this second and stronger refusal. It is as though he knew best what was fitting for Christ to do.

"If I wash thee not," &c. From the outward act Christ now turns to the inward meaning, though St. Peter does not so understand Him. It is as though He said, 'This washing is but a sign and type of an 'inward washing, without which thou hast no part in Me.'

A.D. 30. 9 Simon Peter saith unto Him, Lord, not my feet only, but also *my* hands and *my* head.

10 Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash *his* feet, but is clean every whit: and [k] ye are clean, but not all.

[k] ch. 15. 3.

[l] ch. 6. 64.

11 For [l] He knew who should betray Him; therefore said He, Ye are not all clean.

12 So after He had washed their feet, and had taken His garments, and was set down again, He said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?

[m] Matt. 23. 8, 10. Luke 6. 46. 1 Cor. 8. 6. & 12. 3. Phil. 2. 11.

13 [m] Ye call Me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for *so* I am.

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9. "Lord, not my feet" &c. The eagerness of the Apostle is at once turned the other way. What he refused vehemently before, he now vehemently desires. If it is to give him a part in Christ, he cannot have too much of it. If St. Peter is over zealous and eager, as here, and yet more a little after (See 37.), are none of us over cold and sluggish? Better Peter's fire than our ice.

10. "He that is washed" &c. The real sense of this verse is, 'He 'that hath been *bathed* needeth not' &c., the word translated "washed" being a different word from that translated "to wash", and signifying the more complete washing of a bath, such as was customary for the wealthier Jews before a feast. Thus the literal meaning would be, 'After a man has partaken of the bath, he only needs to wash his feet 'from the dust that has soiled them on his way.' There is no need to suppose that the Apostles had literally used a bath before the present supper. Our Lord's words point solely to the spiritual meaning. This teaches that those once cleansed by Christ from the pollution of sin need no second cleansing of the same sort, but do need a daily washing from the stains of their daily infirmities. The Apostles—all but one—had been made "clean every whit" by Christ long before this. Yet He would show them that they still needed perpetual cleansing from the dust of their daily failings. So with Christians now. There is "one Baptism for the remission of sins." This is called by St. Paul "the washing"—literally the 'bath'—"of regeneration" (Titus iii. 5.). But in the same verse the Apostle speaks of Christ saving us, not only by this "washing", but also by the "renewing of the Holy "Ghost"; and this "renewing" answers to the daily washing needed by all. "As there must be for us a continual walking in the dirty path-"ways of the world, so there must be a continual washing" (*Prescott.*). "The devil", says Luther, "lets no saint reach heaven with clean feet." To the holiest some dust cleaves, which needs washing away by Christ. "Forgive us our trespasses" is the Christian's daily prayer.

11. "He knew." And yet He washed that traitor's feet—the feet of him who "lifted up his heel against" Him (18.)! Oh most wonderful humility! Let us learn two things from this: 1. Not to scorn to do services for the unworthy and the ungrateful: and 2. To remember that an outward partaking of a holy rite, when the heart is unclean, can bring no grace, and give "no part with" Christ (8.).

14 [n] If I then, *your* Lord and Master, have washed your feet; [o] ye also ought to wash one another's feet. A.D. 30.

[n] Luke 22. 27.
[o] Rom. 12. 10. Gal. 6. 1, 2. 1 Pet. 5. 5.

15 For [p] I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

[p] Matt. 11. 29. Phil. 2. 5. 1 Pet. 2. 21. 1 John 2. 6.

16 [q] Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.

[q] Matt. 10. 24. Luke 6. 40. ch. 15. 20.

17 [r] If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

[r] James 1. 25.

18 I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, [s] **He that eateth bread with Me hath lifted up his heel against Me.** Psalm 41. 9.

[s] ver. 21. Matt. 26. 23.

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14. "**If I then,**" &c. This is the first and simplest lesson of our Lord's act (See on 7.). It teaches us to be ready to do the commonest and lowliest services for others, in a spirit of unpretending humility. We are but Christ's servants, and dare we count ourselves above such humble acts as He Himself performed? St. Paul, in his directions to Timothy as to the character of the widows who should be supported by the Church, counts it one of their duties to have "washed the saints' feet" (1 Tim. v. 10.). In these days the duty binds us in the spirit rather than in the letter. And surely there are numbers in our land, even in these days of dimmer faith and colder love, —especially women, whether devoted to such work altogether, or mingling it with their other duties,—who "know these things", and are "happy" because they "do them" (17.).

15. "**That ye should do**" &c. Jesus now taught in act what He before taught in word, when He said, "Learn of Me; for I am meek "and lowly in heart" (St. Matt. xi. 29.).

18. "**I know whom I have chosen.**" Jesus had chosen *all twelve*, though one of them was a devil (See vi. 70.). So it is best to understand this to mean—not 'I know which among you I have chosen',—but, 'I know the heart and character of each one among you. I am 'not deceived in you, though I have done this act to all alike.' Our Lord is turning back to His words "but not all" (10.), and proving how well He knew the secret thoughts of those before Him.

"**That the scripture**" &c. This does not mean, 'I have made this 'choice that the Scripture may be fulfilled', but simply, 'All is taking 'place that the Scripture may be fulfilled" (See on St. Matt. i. 22.). In other words, 'All is in accordance with the will and foreknowledge 'of God.'

"**He that eateth bread**" &c. In the forty-first Psalm, from which these words are quoted, King David is speaking of his own troubles, but these were a type and shadow of Christ's. How the eating bread with Christ was literally fulfilled in the case of Judas we shall see presently (in 26.). Meanwhile let us mark how fearful a warning is here conveyed to the faithless communicant, who eats bread with Christ, but in his heart rebels against Him.

A.D. 30.

19 [t] [2] Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am *He*.

20 [u] Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth Me; and he that receiveth Me receiveth Him that sent Me.

21 ¶ When Jesus had thus said, [x] He was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that [y] one of you shall betray Me.

22 Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom He spake.

t ch. 14. 29. & 16. 4.
2 Or, *From henceforth.*
u Matt. 10. 40. & 25. 40. Luke 10. 16.
x ch. 12. 27.
y Acts 1. 17. 1 John 2. 19.

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19. "I tell you before" &c. Few things would be so likely to shake the faith of Christ's disciples as to discover afterwards that He had suffered such an one as Judas to be among the chosen Twelve. They might have thought He could not have really known his character, or He would have driven him from Him in righteous anger. So He suffers no doubt to exist on the subject, but shews clearly His Divine knowledge of the traitor's heart.

20. "He that receiveth" &c. This verse at first sight seems to have no connexion with what has gone before, but a little thought will show how close the connexion is. It seems spoken to show how high was the office and election from which Judas fell; as well as to comfort the rest of the Apostles, who would feel disgraced by his fall, with the thought that they were still the heralds and ambassadors of Christ and of the Father who sent Him.

21—30. Announcement of the Betrayal.

St. Matt. xxvi. 20—25. St. Mark xiv. 17—21. St. Luke xxii. 21—23.

21. "Troubled in spirit." Certainly at the thought of the awful wickedness of the fallen Apostle. He now once again more clearly testifies (bears witness) to the fact of the presence of the traitor among them. The Apostles had not understood His meaning before, when He had said they were "not all" clean (10.), and when He had quoted from the forty-first Psalm (18.). Now they cannot mistake His meaning.

22. "Doubting of whom He spake." It seems to us very strange that they should not have suspected Judas. He had so far been a successful hypocrite. Yet each heart knew its own weakness, and the deceitfulness of sin. Large grace makes tender consciences. And so "they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say "unto Him, Lord, is it I?" (St. Matt.). We know indeed what need one among them (not the traitor) had to ask, "Lord, is it I?" Yet perhaps he, who was so soon to deny his Lord thrice, least of all thought of himself as able to fall so low. And yet denying is not so very unlike betraying. Only let us not say this without remembering that the one sin was a settled deliberate purpose, the other a sudden fall in the moment of trial.

23 Now [z] there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved. A.D. 30. [z] ch. 19. 26. & 20. 2. & 21. 7, 20, 24.

24 Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom He spake.

25 He then lying on Jesus' breast saith unto Him, Lord, who is it?

26 Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a [2] sop, when I have dipped *it*. And when He had dipped the sop, He gave *it* to Judas Iscariot, *the son* of Simon. [2] Or, *morsel.*

27 [a] And after the sop Satan entered into him. [a] Luke 22. 3. ch. 6. 70.

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23. "Leaning on Jesus' bosom." The Jews reclined on couches at the table, each leaning on the left arm, so that his head would be near the breast of the one next above him, and his feet on the couch behind the one next below him. (This will explain how the woman could stand behind our Lord and anoint His feet. See St. Luke vii. 38.) It appears that the Jews had discontinued the original mode of eating the Passover standing and prepared as for a journey (See on St. Matt.).

"One of His disciples," &c. Undoubtedly St. John himself, whom the Holy Spirit permitted to speak of himself under this most blessed of titles.

24. "Simon Peter" &c. The claims of Rome make it needful to point out that St. Peter, though in some sense first, as leader and spokesman, of the Apostolic band, yet had no pre-eminence or authority over the rest. Here he is plainly in an inferior place to St. John. We may also take occasion to note that in washing their feet Jesus did not approach him first (See 6.). He may indeed have been on the other side of Christ from St. John, but this would not be so honourable a place, and it is more probable that this was the place of the traitor (See on St. Matt.).

"Beckoned." That is, made signs.

25. "Lying on Jesus' breast." The expression here is not the same as in 23, but means 'throwing himself back upon,' that is, throwing back his head so as to ask the question in a whisper.

26. "He it is," &c. Both question and answer were probably unheard by the rest. This dipping and giving of the sop—probably a piece of bread dipped into the broth made with bitter herbs which was used in the Paschal Supper—was not the same as the dipping his hand with Christ in the dish (See on St. Matt.). *That* seems to have been a *general* expression, pointing only to one of those eating with Him. *This* is the secret sign given to St. John to point out the traitor. Surely this giving of the sop would be looked upon as a mark of favour and regard. Yes; for the Giver loved His own—even the lost among His own—unto the end. Who shall say it was not the last appeal to the seared conscience and hardened heart?

27. "Satan entered into him." Now fully and finally. Judas had made his last choice: rejected his last chance. He was "a devil" a year before, as being a servant of Satan (See on vi. 70.). Satan, whom he served, put it into his heart to betray Christ (See 2.). But now Satan took entire possession of him. He was utterly reprobate. His true

A.D. 30. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly.

28 Now no man at the table knew for what intent He spake this unto him.

[b] ch. 12. 6. 29 For some *of them* thought, because [b] Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy *those things* that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor.

30 He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night.

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master had got him fast at last. Behold the awful growth of sin! Love of money was the root. The fruit was the selling of the Son of God! (See on xii. 6.)

"Do quickly." In St. Matthew our Lord's last word to Judas is, "Thou hast said", in answer to his question of daring hypocrisy, "Master, is it I?" The present words of Christ must have followed those. "Those signified, 'I see through thee: thou knowest it: "'I also know it.'" Now Judas begins to *act*. His resolve is finally taken. He is leaving the chamber. Therefore Jesus, who could not die except by His own free will, for His life no man took from Him, but He laid it down of Himself (See x. 18.), added this, "What thou "doest, do quickly." "'I not merely suffer it: I command thee to do "'it, quickly, now. Thou willest it; I also will it. Get thee hence.'" (*Stier.*)

28. "No man knew" &c. St. John may possibly mean none except himself, but it seems better to suppose that, while certainly St. John, and probably St. Peter and others, knew by this time that it was Judas who should betray Christ, yet none of them thought the deed of darkness was to be done so soon, or that our Saviour spoke of the betrayal itself when He spoke His last words to Judas.

29. "Buy those things" &c. It would be too late to buy anything for the very meal in which they had been engaged. Therefore it seems best to understand "the feast" here in the wider sense, as meaning the whole paschal week, rather than in the sense of the one great paschal meal (See *Note* on St. Matt. xxvi. 17.).

"That he should give" &c. This little hint supplies a key to our Lord's usual habit. His loving and thoughtful remembrance of the poor made it seem not improbable that He should even at that hour of the night have sent Judas out on some errand of mercy. These two guesses of the Apostles are named to show how little they knew what Judas really went out to do.

30. "It was night." Night in the world without; but (as has been

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30. "*Went immediately out.*" It will be noticed that, although St. John gives our Lord's great prophetical discourse upon the subject in chapter vi., yet he gives no account of the actual institution of the Lord's Supper. It was unnecessary, since he wrote long after the other Evangelists, and when the holy sacrament itself was the great universal act of Christian worship. It will, however, naturally be asked, in what portion of St. John's account of the last Supper are we to insert the Institution of the Sacrament, and was it before or after the departure of Judas? It is probably best to understand it as taking place before, but See on St. Matt. xxvi. 25, and *Note* on St. Luke xxii. 21.

31 ¶ Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus A.D. 30.
said, [c] Now is the Son of man glorified, and [d] God [c] ch. 12. 23.
is glorified in Him. [d] ch. 14. 13. 1 Pet. 4. 11.
32 [e] If God be glorified in Him, God shall also [e] ch. 17. 1, 4, 5, 6.
glorify Him in Himself, and [f] shall straightway [f] ch. 12. 23.
glorify Him.

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well said) tenfold darker night in the traitor's heart. He has left for ever the Light of the world, and is in league with the prince of darkness.

31—35. Christ about to be glorified enjoins love on His disciples.

31. "When he was gone out," &c. From this place to the end of the 17th chapter is the most solemn and affecting portion of the whole Gospel narrative. In it Jesus opens His heart to His chosen ones. The traitor is gone, and love—intense overflowing love—binds now the Divine Master and His little band of faithful ones together. There is a tone of great peace and calm as well as of holy awe in these most blessed chapters. "These were the last moments which "the Lord spent in the midst of His own before His Passion, and "words full of heavenly meaning flowed during them from His holy "Lips. All that His Heart, glowing with love, had yet to say to His "own was compressed into this short space of time. At first the con- "versation with the disciples takes more the form of usual dialogue: "reclining at the table, they mournfully reply to and question Him. "But when (xiv. 31.) they had risen from the supper, the discourse of "Christ took a higher form. Surrounding their Master, the disciples "listened to the words of Life, and seldom spoke (only xvi. 17, 29.). "Finally, in the sublime prayer of the great High Priest (xvii.) the "whole Soul of Christ flowed forth in earnest intercession for His own "to His Heavenly Father" (*Olshausen quoted by Alford.*).

"Now is the Son of man" &c. The work of glorification had begun, for the work of the Passion had begun. It was in His Death that Christ was glorified (See on xii. 28, 31, 32.). The Cross is so close that Jesus says, "Now". That Cross of shame was the Saviour's Throne of glory.

"God is glorified in Him." That is, in the Passion and Death of His Son, by which is fulfilled the prayer, "Father, glorify Thy Name" (xii. 28.); for do not these set forth, as nothing else could, the infinite love, and Divine compassion, of the Father as well as of the Son? God is more glorified by the Cross of Jesus than by the waters of the Flood or the thunders of Sinai.

32. "If God" &c. The "If" here does not imply any doubt. It is nearly the same as 'since' or 'when', and is used in the same sense as the "If" in the words, "If I be lifted up" (xii. 32.). By "in Him- "self" is here meant '*by* Himself', that is, 'by His own act or power', and is spoken of the Father, not of the Son. So that the meaning is, 'God shall *Himself—by His own act or power*—glorify the Son: and 'this "straightway."' God did so in the marvels of the Crucifixion,—the darkness, the earthquake, the rent veil of the Temple,—but still more in the Resurrection.

A.D. 30.

33 Little children, yet a little while I am with
[g] ch. 7. 34. & 8. 21. you. Ye shall seek Me: [g] and as I said unto the
Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say
[h] Lev. 19. 18. ch. 15. 12, 17. Eph. 5. 2. 1 Thes. 4. 9. James 2. 8. 1 Pet. 1. 22. 1 John 2. 7, 8. & 3. 11, 23. & 4. 21. to you.

34 [h] A new commandment I give unto you, That
ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye
also love one another.

[i] 1 John 2. 5. & 4. 20. 35 [i] By this shall all *men* know that ye are My
disciples, if ye have love one to another.

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33. "Little children." Behold with what tender love Jesus speaks to His Apostles! "He loved them unto the end" (1.).

"A little while." Only a few hours now till His Crucifixion, and then after His Resurrection brief mysterious appearances for forty days, and then seen on earth no more.

"As I said unto the Jews." Twice had He said this (vii. 34, and viii. 21.), the second time with the fearful addition, "Ye shall die in "your sins." These sad words He could not speak to the Eleven, for, though indeed they could not come to Him yet, still death, which would place a wider gulf than ever between the unbelievers and the Saviour, would bring His own to Him again. To die is to them to "depart "and be with Christ" (Phil. i. 23.).

34. "A new commandment." The commandment to love one another was not wholly new. Indeed "Thou shalt love thy neighbour "as thyself" was part of the law of Moses (See Lev. xix. 18.); and our Lord Himself declares that "all the Law and the Prophets" hung upon the two commandments of love to God and love to man (See St. Matt. xxii. 37—40. and Compare Rom. xiii. 8.). How then does Christ call this a *new* commandment? The answer seems to be, Because it was now announced as the great leading central command of the new Covenant. Our Lord had just instituted the holy Sacrament as the new Passover: and, just as after the first Passover the Law was given in thunders on Sinai, so now after the institution of the new Passover the Law of the new covenant was made known. It is true that love to others was known as one of God's commands of old, yet the great leading central commands of the old covenant were the Ten written upon the two Tables of stone by the Finger of God. Christ does not destroy these, but He announces in that Upper Chamber the principle and leading feature of the new Covenant, namely, Love. The Evangelist doubtless refers to this when he speaks in his first Epistle of the law of Love as both an "old commandment" and a "new "commandment" (1 St. John ii. 7, 8.). There are other ways in which the old commandment has become in some sense new: namely, 1. Because among Christians there is a new and closer bond of love than was before; and 2. Because there is a new and higher Pattern of love than was before. Of this latter—the Saviour's own example of love—He speaks in the next words,—"as I have loved you."

35. "By this shall all men" &c. Our Lord uses like language in His wonderful prayer, praying for His disciples "that they all may be "one, as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may "be one in Us; *that the world may believe* that Thou hast sent Me"

36 ¶ Simon Peter said unto Him, Lord, whither goest Thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow Me now; but [k] thou shalt follow Me afterwards. A.D. 30. [k] ch. 21. 18. 2 Pet. 1. 14.

37 Peter said unto Him, Lord, why cannot I follow Thee now? I will lay down my life for Thy sake.

38 Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for My sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied Me thrice.

CHAPTER XIV.

1 *Christ comforteth His disciples with the hope of heaven:* 6 *professeth Himself the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and One with the Father:* 13 *assureth their prayers in His name to be effectual:* 15 *requesteth love and obedience,* 16 *promiseth the Holy Ghost the Comforter,* 27 *and leaveth His peace with them.*

LET [a] not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. [a] ver. 27. ch. 16. 22, 23.

(xvii. 21.). By love here,—by unity there—are Christ's disciples to be known. It was so in primitive times. Then it could be said, "See "how these Christians love one another!" But what shall we say now?

36—38. The Prophecy of St. Peter's Denial.

St. Matt. xxvi. 30—35. St. Mark xiv. 26—31. St. Luke xxii. 31—34.

36. "Simon Peter said" &c. We may imagine Jesus to have paused a little while after the last words, which gave St. Peter the opportunity of referring back to His earlier saying as to His departure. The Apostle felt able to follow his Master even to death itself. He never doubted his own courage. How well does he teach us the lesson, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Cor. x. 12.).

"Whither I go" &c. Christ does not tell His Apostle that he can *never* follow Him. It is, 'Not now—but afterwards.' 'Not now', for he lacked the courage, as was too sadly proved; 'but afterwards', for he did indeed in the end follow his Master by laying down his life for His sake (See on xxi. 18, 19.).

CHAPTER XIV.

XIV.—XVI. Final discourse the night before the Crucifixion.

1. "Let not your heart" &c. Greatly must the Apostles have needed comfort, and sorely must their hearts have been troubled, for

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37, 38. It seems probable, as has been said in the *Note* on St. Matt. xxvi. 31., that this announcement of St. Peter's denial really occurred a little later, namely, after the going forth from the "upper room."

CHAPTER XIV.

1. "*Ye believe*" *&c.* Probably the word

A.D. 30.

2 In My Father's house are many mansions: if *it were* not *so*, I would have told you. [b] I go to prepare a place for you.

3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, [c] I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that [d] where I am, *there* ye may be also.

[b] ch. 13. 33, 36.
[c] ver. 18, 28. Acts 1. 11.
[d] ch. 12. 26. & 17. 24. 1 Thess. 4. 17.

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they had heard that their Master was about to leave them, that one of themselves was to betray Him, and that another would deny Him. And could any words be fuller of blessed comfort than those which follow?

"Ye believe in God," &c. Christ would urge faith in God, and in Himself as Son of God and One with the Father, as the real ground of all comfort. According to our translation (but see *Note*) He implies that the Apostles had faith in God, but were lacking in faith towards Himself. Doubtless they still held very imperfect notions of His Nature and office and work; and it would be by a more perfect realizing of these that their hearts would be able to put away their trouble, and to find "joy and peace in believing" (Rom. xv. 13. See on xv. 11.).

2. **"In My Father's house" &c.** By the "house" is certainly meant the heaven in which God is; that is, the place where His glorious presence is revealed. "Mansions" means 'abodes' or 'dwelling-'places.' Christ had told His Apostles that, whither He was going, they could not come. He now tells them, not only that they should follow Him afterwards, but still more that He is going to prepare a place for them, and that He will come back and fetch them. Some have seen in the words "many mansions" a hint of the *degrees* of glory which await the saints. This may be so, and it would be in accordance with the teaching of holy scripture in other places (See on St. Matt. xx. 10. xxv. 21.), but the main thought in this place seems to be the abundance of the room. "There is a place for *all*, where the mansions "are many" (*Burgon.*).

"To prepare a place." Christ was now about to receive "all power "in heaven and in earth" (St. Matth. xxviii. 18.). Thus, when He ascended up, He entered heaven as King over the many mansions, which He had purchased for His redeemed and would distribute to them at His second glorious appearing. He thus prepares a place, going before to open the way, and to claim the right, and to apportion the inheritance.

3. **"I will come again," &c.** All scripture casts forward the Christian's hope to the second coming of his Lord. It is impossible to reconcile Scripture language with the popular idea that each one will be judged and will enter upon his final state of joy or misery immediately upon death. The judgment, and the entrance into eternal joy or eternal

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"Believe" is a command in both parts of this sentence, and the "ye" should be omitted. In the Greek exactly the same word signifies 'Believe' (as a command) and 'Ye believe' (as a fact asserted), and this word, being used in both parts of the sentence, would probably have the same sense in both. Some indeed would translate it 'ye believe' in both cases It seems however best to take the sentence as urging on the Apostles a living faith in both God the Father and God the Son as the true ground of their comfort. It may also be observed that the Greek word translated "in" in both clauses is more strictly "upon", and is never used of belief in any truth, or in any person except God,

4 And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. A.D. 30.

5 Thomas saith unto Him, Lord, we know not whither Thou goest; and how can we know the way?

6 Jesus saith unto him, I am [e] the Way, [f] the Truth, and [g] the Life: [h] no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.

7 [i] If ye had known Me, ye should have known My Father also: and from henceforth ye know Him, and have seen Him.

[e] Heb. 9. 8.
[f] ch. 1. 17. & 8. 32.
[g] ch. 1. 4. & 11. 25.
[h] ch. 10. 9.
[i] ch. 8. 19.

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woe, are always spoken of as taking place at the second coming of Christ. (As to the Intermediate State see on St. Luke xvi. 25.)

4. **"Whither I go" &c.** These things the Apostles knew, and knew not. They knew, for they knew God the Father, to whom Christ went, and they knew Christ Himself, who is the Way. But they knew not, for as yet they understood not.

5. **"Lord, we know not" &c.** It seems strange that any of them should not have known whither their Lord went, when He had told them so plainly of His Father's House. Yet they were "slow of heart" (St. Luke xxiv. 25.) in understanding. Especially was St. Thomas slow in receiving the truth (See xx. 24, 25.).

6. **"I am the Way," &c.** Thomas spoke first of the "whither", and then of the "Way." Jesus replies not to the "whither", for they that know the "Way" are led thither, and need not to see the golden walls of the Father's House ever before them. So He only tells them of the way. It is as though one asked, 'Where is the great Ocean? 'And how shall I find my way to it?' and another should take him to a river-side, and say, 'That river runs to the Ocean. Trust thyself to 'it, and it will bear thee thither.' When Christ calls Himself "the "Way", He means what He says at the end of this verse—that no man can reach God except through Him;—and this in two senses, 1. in respect of His work *for* us, since we, as sinners, could not approach God save through His merits and Atonement; 2. in respect of His work *in* us, since the pathway which leads to heaven is a life conformed to Christ. The Cross is the leading thought in both views. Christ is the Way, in that He bare the Cross for us: and Christ is the Way, in that we must take up our cross daily, and follow Him.

When our Lord adds "I am the Truth, and the Life", these are not separate statements, each of the same force as the "I am the Way", but rather they belong to and explain that. The words have been understood thus: 'I am the Way; the *true* Way; the *living* Way'; but this, though true, takes away from the full force of the saying. We would rather state it thus: 'I am the Way; and, being the Way, I am the 'Truth, which alone can save you from straying into false paths; and 'the Life, which alone can quicken and support you in passing along 'the true Way.'

7. **"If ye had known Me," &c.** Our Lord had spoken like words before, but to very different hearers (See on viii. 19.). They that knew Christ as God's Son knew the Father also, since He and the Father are

A.D. 30.

8 Philip saith unto Him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.

9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? [k] He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou *then*, Shew us the Father?

10 Believest thou not that [l] I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak unto you [m] I speak not of Myself: but the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works.

11 Believe Me that I *am* in the Father, and the Father in Me: [n] or else believe Me for the very works' sake.

k ch. 12. 45. Col. 1. 15. Heb. 1. 3.

l ver. 20. ch. 10. 38. & 17. 21, 23.

m ch. 5. 19. & 7. 16. & 8. 28. & 12. 49.

n ch. 5. 36. & 10. 38.

One. He is the Word, revealing God to man. *In Himself* God cannot be seen or known by man. It is only by knowing the Son that man can know the Father.

"From henceforth." That is, from the time that was then close at hand—the "now" of Christ's prophetic vision of His coming glory (See xiii. 31.). It is true the Apostles might have known and seen (with spiritual sight) the Father in the Son before this. But now their eyes would begin to open more fully.

8. "Lord, shew us the Father," &c. Philip plainly is amazed at those last words, "Ye know Him, and have seen Him." 'When have 'I seen Him?' he would say: 'Let us but behold Him for one moment, 'and we shall be satisfied.' How weak was that faith, and how imperfect that knowledge, which would thus sever between the Father and the Son, and ask for that which could be granted to no man! And yet how true a thing did Philip speak, even if he had not the thought in his mind, when he said, "It sufficeth us": for what else will wholly and for ever suffice except the vision of God?

9. "Have I been" &c. Jesus condescends to unfold the mystery of His Oneness with the Father yet more fully to the wondering eleven in His answer to St. Philip. He knew there was no pride or obstinacy in the Apostle's faltering words; there was weak faith, but there was the desire to learn, and He who is "the Truth" sheds new rays of light upon the dimness of that faith. Let these rays of heavenly light fall upon our hearts, and awake in them an adoring reverence. The human mind as yet sees "through a glass darkly" (1 Cor. xiii. 12.); and the truths here revealed are heavenly mysteries. We profess not to measure and fathom them now. We hope some day to know even as we are known.

10. "The words" &c. This sentence may perhaps be drawn out in its full meaning thus:—"The words which I speak unto you, I speak "not of Myself; and the works which I do, I do not of Myself: but "the Father that dwelleth in Me, He speaketh the words, and He "doeth the works" (*Burgon.* Upon the doctrine of this passage see on v. 18, 19.).

11. "Believe Me" &c. That is, 'Believe the simple word of truth, 'when I declare this mystery,—or, if that is too hard, believe Me on 'the testimony of My works.' Jesus had often appealed to the witness

12 [o] Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater *works* than these shall he do; because I go unto My Father. A.D. 30.

[o] Matt. 21. 21. Mark 16. 17. Luke 10. 17.

13 [p] And whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

[p] Matt. 7. 7. & 21. 22. Mark 11. 24. Luke 11. 9. ch. 15. 7, 16. & 16. 23, 24. James 1. 5. 1 John 3. 22. & 5. 14.

of His works in arguing with the unbelieving Jews (See v. 36. x. 37, 38.). He now urges the same evidence upon the Apostles themselves, if His simple word suffices not.

12. "He that believeth" &c. This would be a still farther proof of Christ's oneness with the Father. Not only had men the witness of those works which Christ performed in His own Person while on earth, but they had also the witness of still greater works which He performed in the person of His servants, after He had Himself ascended. For we must beware of thinking of these "greater works" as done in any way apart from Christ, or otherwise than by His power. They are done by those who believe on Him, and because He is gone to the Father, and grants the prayers of those who ask in His Name. But, even so, what are these "greater works"? The Apostles did no works more wonderful in themselves than those Christ had done. Even when they did miracles like His, they did them in His Name, and not in their own. The "greater" must then refer to the *effects* of their works. For it was God's will that after the Ascension more marvellous results should follow the outpouring of the Holy Spirit than were effected by our Lord's most wonderful miracles. Thus neither the Feeding of the five thousand, nor the Raising of Lazarus, produced such fruit as the vast ingathering of Pentecost upon St. Peter's preaching.

13. "Whatsoever ye shall ask" &c. This is a continuation of the reason for the "greater works." They are done because Christ has gone to the Father, and there, sitting on the Right Hand of the Father, hears and grants His people's prayers, and pours down on them His gifts and powers. There is much to be noted in this new rule of prayer. 1. "In "My Name." This signifies 'pleading My merits, and offering your petitions through Me your great High Priest.' In obedience to this saying the Church concludes all her prayers to the Father with the words "through Jesus Christ our Lord", or the like. But 2. our Lord does not say, 'My Father will do it', but "*I* will do it." Thus the "greater "works" themselves are none other than His works. But is not this a claim to Divine power? Yes; Jesus speaks as God:—"*I* will do it." Shall we doubt that, if He thus grants the prayer, the prayer may also be fitly addressed to Him? So the Church Catholic has held, always and everywhere. Furthermore, 3. it must always be remembered that the "Whatsoever" here, as the "any thing" in the next verse, must have its limits in the wisdom and love of God.

"That the Father may be glorified" &c. The triumphs of Christianity are the setting forth of God's glory. The Father's Name is

13. "*And whatsoever*" *&c.* It is better to place only a comma at the end of the twelfth verse, and to join this closely with it. The stops are no part of the original Gospel, having been added for the sake of convenience at a later time (See *Note* on St. Mark iii. 19.).

A.D. 30. 14 If ye shall ask any thing in My name, I will
q ver. 21, 23. ch. 15. 10, 14. 1 John 5. 3. do *it*.
15 q If ye love Me, keep My commandments.
r ch. 15. 26. & 16. 7. Rom. 8. 15, 26. 16 And I will pray the Father, and r He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide
s ch. 15. 26. & 16. 13. 1 John 4. 6. with you for ever;
t 1 Cor. 2. 14. 17 *even* s the Spirit of Truth; t whom the world

hallowed best by the good works which the Son enables His disciples to perform through the Spirit.

14. "If ye shall ask" &c. Solemnly repeated, but with a wider application than before. In the last verse the prayers spoken of might seem to refer to the "greater works" only. Here they are the asking of "any thing" (See on St. Matt. vii. 7.). "He that has learnt to pray "as he ought has got the secret of a holy life" (*Bishop Wilson.*).

15. "If ye love Me," &c. This, "If ye love Me" seems to imply, though unspoken, 'as I know ye do.' Jesus did not doubt their love, imperfect though it was (as whose is not?). Full of love and tenderness are His parting words to "His own"; and this is no stern command, but a gentle pleading. Can we doubt that St. John thought of these words when he wrote in his Epistle, "This is the love of God, that we "keep His commandments" (1 St. John v. 3.)? Obedience is ever the true test and evidence of love.

16. "Another Comforter." That is, 'Another in place of Myself.' Christ had hitherto been their Comforter. The word translated "Com- "forter" in this Gospel is in the Greek "Paraclete", and is the same which is translated "Advocate" in St. John's 1st Epistle (ii. 1.). It means literally one who pleads for, and takes the part of, another. Thus it has the general sense of one who supports, encourages, and strengthens. It should be observed that the English word "Comforter" may easily lead us into too narrow a view of the sense, since in the present day we use the word only of one who *consoles*, whereas its true and older sense is one who *strengthens*. We must carefully note the evidence which this verse affords to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, the Three Persons of which are separately named, the *Son* speaking the words and saying, "*I* will pray", the *Father* who will send, and the *Comforter* who will be sent (See on St. Matt. iii. 17.).

"That He may abide with you for ever." Not going away after a short stay, like Christ Himself, but remaining as the strength and life of His Church even to the end of the world. Blessed Gift! Yet, even while we accept with deepest thankfulness this *other* Comforter, we forget not that the One who promised this abiding presence is not Himself lost to us, for He said, not only 'I will send you another Comforter', but also, "*I* will come to you" (18.), and "Lo! *I* am with you alway "even unto the end of the world" (St. Matt. xxviii. 20.).

17. "The Spirit of Truth." This title points at once to one part of the Holy Spirit's office—namely, that of teaching and confirming the truth (This is more fully drawn out in 26, and xvi. 13—15.). It may be said that the Holy Spirit's office divides itself into two great divi-

16. "*Comforter.*" Closely connected in | 'fortify', 'fortitude', all of which come its origin with such words as 'fortress', | from the Latin word for *strong*.

cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither A.D. 30.
knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He dwelleth [u] with you, [u] and shall be in you.
18 [x] I will not leave you [2] comfortless: [y] I will come to you.

[u] 1 John 2. 27.
[x] Mat. 28. 20.
[2] Or, *orphans.*
[y] ver. 3, 28.

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sions answering to the two great parts of man's spiritual nature. These are commonly called the mind and the heart,—the mind being that part which knows and thinks and reasons, the heart that part which feels and wills and acts. The Holy Spirit's work is with both. He enlightens the mind; and He sanctifies the heart. To the former He is the Spirit of Truth; to the latter the Spirit of Holiness. The effect of His work in the former is a right faith; in the latter a right practice. Our Lord in His sayings concerning the Comforter speaks chiefly of the former part of His work, because the enlightenment of their minds to discern the truth and to be able to teach it to others was the first great need of the Apostles. Still this first part of the Comforter's work passes directly into the second, for the truths which He imparts are such as must immediately affect our hearts and lives (See on xvi. 8—11.), and our great Advocate Himself links the two parts closely together when He prays for us, "Sanctify them through Thy truth" (xvii. 17.).

"Whom the world" &c. By the "world" is meant the worldly,—those who live to this world (See on vii. 7.). These cannot receive the Holy Spirit, because they have no spiritual sight to discern His work, or to know His power. Their eyes being fixed on the things of the world, they behold not the things of the Spirit. They are looking in a wrong direction. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the "Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he "know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. ii. 14.).

"Ye know Him;" &c. The Apostles already knew something of the Holy Spirit's nature and power (See the promise, St. Luke xi. 13.), and received some share of the Divine Gift whilst Christ was still with them (See xx. 22.). Indeed we know that the prophets long before "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 St. Peter i. 21.). But, if holy men already possessed some knowledge of this Divine power, how much greater was that knowledge to be when the great promise of His coming was fulfilled at Pentecost!

18. "I will not leave you" &c. The word translated "comfort-"less" is in no way connected with the word 'Comforter'. Its literal meaning is 'orphans'. He has called His disciples "little children" (xiii. 33.), and now He comforts them by saying He will not leave them orphans,—destitute and helpless. But lo, when we expect Him to add, 'I will send you a Comforter', He says, "I will come unto "you"! But how is this? He cannot be speaking only of the forty days' sojourn on earth after His Resurrection. His words are far deeper and farther-reaching than this, as the whole following passage shows. He is speaking of His spiritual presence with His Church (See on 16, and St. Matth. xxviii. 20.). He comes, when the Comforter comes. "The coming of the Spirit was in truth not so much in order to supply "His place when absent, as to make Him present in a nearer and "more blessed way" (*P. Young.*). Thus the Son joins Himself in His

A.D. 30.

19 Yet a little while, and the world seeth Me no more; but [z] ye see Me: [a] because I live, ye shall live also.

20 At that day ye shall know that [b] I *am* in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you.

21 [c] He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me: and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him.

[z] ch. 16. 16.
[a] 1 Cor. 15. 20.
[b] ver. 10. ch. 10. 38. & 17. 21, 23, 26.
[c] ver. 15, 23. 1 John 2. 5. & 5. 3.

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coming with the Spirit. A few verses after the Father is joined with the Son (23.). Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, all come; all are present; all abide. It is full of mystery. But so is the great doctrine of the Holy Trinity, which alone can furnish a key to unlock these difficult sayings. If an explanation is asked for, we can but reverently answer, 'God is Three and One.' And then when we turn to ourselves, and think of the wonderful promise of this verse, must we not exclaim, "Lord, what is man that Thou art mindful of him: and the son of "man, that Thou visitest him?" (Ps. viii. 4.).

19. "But ye see Me." The meaning here is, 'Ye *shall* see Me', for the words are spoken of what would take place after "the little "while", and when the Comforter should come. And this seeing is no sight of the bodily eye, but the gaze of the soul's eye, which is Faith, illumined by the light of the Spirit.

"Because I live," &c. As the sight here spoken of is spiritual sight, so the life here spoken of is spiritual life. And this life flows from Christ's life. He is "the Life", ever living, and having "life "in Himself" (See on v. 25, 26.), and through union with Him His people "live also", drawing from Him their true life, even as the branch from the stem.

20. "At that day" &c. By "that day" is meant the time when the Comforter should come to enlighten their understandings. Then would they no longer say, in their ignorance, "Lord, show us the "Father", for the Spirit of Truth would teach them to know the perfect unity between the Father and the Son,—a unity so close that the Son Himself declares, "I am in the Father." But this is not all. For the same Divine Spirit would teach them a still more blessed truth, even that of *their own* spiritual oneness with their Lord—"ye in Me, and I "in you." There have been those who would explain away these deeply mysterious and awful expressions, which we meet with so often in the New Testament, speaking of them as Eastern modes of expression, not to be taken too literally, and the like. This is a most dangerous way of dealing with God's word. Let us accept such language in all humility, and, believing that it speaks of deep spiritual truths and realities, pray that we may by the help of the Spirit of Truth enter more and more fully into its meaning and blessedness.

21. "He that hath" &c. That is, He that knoweth, and doeth them (Compare St. Matt. vii. 24. Rom. ii. 13.). Thus again (See 15.) obedience is made the proof of love.

"Will manifest Myself." By that inward and spiritual manifestation of which Christ has been already speaking. This is promised, not to Apostles only, but to every one who proves his love by his

22 [d] Judas saith unto Him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that Thou wilt manifest Thyself unto us, and not unto the world? A. D. 30.

23 Jesus answered and said unto him, [e] If a man love Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, [f] and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him.

24 He that loveth Me not keepeth not My sayings: and [g] the word which ye hear is not Mine, but the Father's which sent Me.

25 These things have I spoken unto you, being *yet* present with you.

26 But [h] the Comforter, *which is* the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, [i] He shall

[d] Luke 6. 16.
[e] ver. 15.
[f] 1 John 2. 24. Rev. 3. 20.
[g] ver. 10. ch. 5. 19, 38. & 7. 16. & 8. 28. & 12. 49.
[h] ver. 16. Luke 24. 49. ch. 15. 26. & 16. 7.
[i] ch. 2. 22. & 12. 16. & 16. 13. 1 John 2. 20, 27.

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obedience. Stier thoughtfully remarks that, as St. Philip once in his ignorance said, "Lord, show us the Father", so we, in our ignorance and dimness of faith, may not unfitly say, 'O Holy Spirit, show us 'the Son'.

22. "Judas" &c. St. Jude still, as it seems, looked for some outward visible manifestation of Christ as king. Even the Apostles were very slow in shaking off their old Jewish notions of a Messiah who should be a great temporal king and deliverer of his people (See Acts i. 6.). This "Judas" is the same as "Lebbæus" of St. Matthew (x. 3.).

23. "We will come" &c. Jesus answers St. Jude, not by explaining what as yet he could not receive, but by repeating His own words, only with the great addition of the promise of the *Father's* coming as well as His own. This ought to show St. Jude that the coming and the manifestation are spiritual only. This coming is not a different one from the coming of the Holy Ghost the Comforter. Only, as Christ before joined Himself with the Holy Spirit in the promised coming (See on 18.), so now He joins the Father with Both; showing that in reality, though One Divine Person may be manifested more at one time, and Another at another, yet Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are One God, who cannot be divided, and therefore where One Person of the Holy Trinity is, there the Other Persons are also. Again we must add (as on 20.), However little we can bear witness to our own personal experience of the exalted truth here revealed, let us bow in all humility before the Divine word, and, if we doubt, doubt—not the reality of the promise, but the fitness of our own hearts for the presence of the Heavenly Guest.

24. "He that loveth Me not" &c. "The full sense of this verse "is as follows: 'As those who show their love to Me by keeping My "'words will be loved both by Me and My Father (23.); so, on the "'other hand, they who, loving Me not, do not keep My saying, will "'be shut out as well from My Father's love as from Mine; since the "'word which ye hear from Me is not Mine only, but My Father's "'also who sent Me'" (*Lonsdale and Hale.*).

26. "In My name." Not only, 'in answer to My prayers', but 'as 'My Gift,—as the great Guide and Comforter of My Church.'

A.D. 30. teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

k Phil. 4. 7. Col. 3. 15. l ver. 1.

27 k Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. l Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

m ver. 3, 18. n ver. 12. ch. 16. 16. & 20. 17. o See chap. 5. 18. & 10. 30. Phil. 2. 6.

28 Ye have heard how m I said unto you, I go away, and come *again* unto you. If ye loved Me, ye would rejoice, because I said, n I go unto the Father: for o My Father is greater than I.

"He shall teach" &c. This part of the Holy Spirit's office is implied in the words "the Spirit of Truth" (See on 17.). By "all things" is not meant all sorts of human knowledge, but all things needful for the salvation of man. These things would be chiefly the truths concerning Christ Himself (See on xvi. 14.); but it does not seem right to say (as some do) that by the "all things" which the Holy Ghost was to teach we are to understand only the same things which the second part of the sentence says He would bring to remembrance; as though this second part were only an explanation of the first; or as though it were 'He will teach you *by* bringing to remembrance.' For a little later our Lord speaks of things which He could not teach them as yet, but which the Holy Ghost would teach them afterwards (See xvi. 12, 13.), and such may be meant in the first "all things" here. Upon this passage rests the perfect truthfulness of the Gospel narratives, and from it we may gather much concerning the nature of Inspiration.

27. **"Peace I leave" &c.** These most blessed parting words, spoken, as is thought, after a short pause, show that throughout these chapters our Lord is speaking as one immediately about to depart. To wish 'Peace' to another was a common form of salutation among the Jews, and Christ in these words sanctifies and ennobles the familiar salutation. But Christ's salutation is a word of power. He not only wishes peace, but *gives* it (See on xx. 21.). The second clause—"My peace I give "unto you"—seems spoken to show the true nature and blessedness of the gift. It is more than "Peace" which He gives. It is *His own* Peace. And by this He means that perfect and serene contentment which He was about to enter after His Passion, and which He imparts by His Spirit to those who are "in Him", and in whom He dwells. This is the "Peace of God, which passeth all understanding" (Phil. iv. 7.). It can only be where faith is strong. It is "joy and peace in "believing" (Rom. xv. 13.).

"Not as the world" &c. The world can only give us an idle wish. The word is spoken in kindliness, but it has no power to bless. Christ's word is no empty form. It bestows that which it utters.

28. **"Ye would rejoice," &c.** They would have rejoiced, had they heard that Christ was about to set up an earthly kingdom, and to deliver the Jews from their enemies. How much more ought they to have rejoiced, when He was about to return to His throne of glory, to reign over His Church for ever, and to deliver His people from their spiritual foes (See on xvi. 5, 6.).

"For My Father is greater than I." Christ elsewhere declares both His oneness with, and equality with, the Father (See on v. 18, 23.).

29 And [p] now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe. A.D. 30.
[p] ch. 13. 19. & 16. 4.

30 Hereafter I will not talk much with you: [q] for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me.
[q] ch. 12. 31. & 16. 11.

31 But that the world may know that I love the Father; and [r] as the Father gave Me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence.
[r] ch. 10. 18. Phil. 2. 8. Heb. 5. 8.

How then are we to understand His words in this place? Certainly not as implying any difference in nature, or power, or eternity. Two explanations are given. 1. Many understand the words as speaking only of that distinction *in order* which exists between Father and Son, the Father being self-existent from everlasting, the Son everlastingly begotten of the Father. 2. Others think that our Lord here speaks of "His present state as compared with the heavenly glory to which He "was soon to be exalted" (*Calvin.*), meaning, 'My Father in His 'heavenly glory, is greater than I am in this state of humiliation'. The latter is certainly the simpler explanation.

29. "Ye might believe." That is, believe fully and firmly. They had some faith already, but it was dim and weak.

30. "The prince of this world cometh." Satan was returning for a last conflict with the Son of God. After the Temptation in the wilderness "he departed from Him for a season" (See on St. Matt. xxvi. 37. and St. Luke iv. 13.).

"And hath nothing in Me." That is, 'findeth nothing—no sin, '—nothing in which he can triumph over Me.' These words must be taken in close connection with the next verse, the whole sense of the passage being as follows: 'Satan cometh to put forth all his strength 'against Me, and He cannot prevail against Me, for He can find no 'sin in Me. Nevertheless I shall suffer him to effect the death of My 'Body, in obedience to the will of the Father that I should die for 'the world, and thus the world shall know that I love the Father.' It should be stated that there is another interpretation of the words "hath "nothing in Me" which understands them to mean, 'hath no power 'over Me.' If this meaning be taken, the general sense is but little altered. We should then understand Jesus to say: 'Though Satan 'has no power over Me, yet I submit, that the world may know that 'I love the Father.'

31. "But that the world" &c. This seems to depend upon the words "The prince of this world cometh": 'he cometh', that is, 'to 'bring to Me suffering and death'. 'Though he can find no fault in 'Me, yet will I submit to the passion and death he would inflict upon 'Me.' It would be better not to put a full stop at the end of verse 30.

"Arise, let us go hence." At this moment the Eleven would rise from the table, and prepare to follow their Master to Gethsemane. Yet it seems probable that there was a pause before starting, and that the next discourses were spoken immediately after rising from the table, but before leaving the upper-chamber. Some think they were spoken while on the way to Gethsemane, but the actual departure of our Lord from the room seems to be spoken of in the 1st verse of the 18th chapter, at the conclusion of the great intercessory Prayer.

A.D. 30.

CHAPTER XV.

1 *The consolation and mutual love between Christ and His members, under the parable of the vine.* 18 *A comfort in the hatred and persecution of the world.* 26 *The office of the Holy Ghost, and of the apostles.*

I AM the true Vine, and My Father is the Husbandman.

[a] Matt. 15. 13. 2 [a] Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit He

CHAPTER XV.

Final Discourse continued.

1. "I am the true Vine." Those who think the discourses of this and the next chapter were uttered after leaving the upper-chamber and on the way to Gethsemane, have pointed out that our Lord and the Eleven would pass close to the Temple, over the gates of which was a gigantic golden vine, the clusters of grapes on which were six feet in length. This, it is thought, may have been used by our Lord as the occasion of His parable of the Vine. It is however better perhaps to suppose that our Lord is still speaking in the upper-chamber (See on xiv. 31.). We may observe that, strictly speaking, St. John gives no parable of our Lord, for this of the Vine, like the discourse upon the Good Shepherd (See on x. 1—21.), is not cast in the form of a true parable, the spiritual meaning being mingled with the figure throughout. Still we may in a looser sense not improperly speak of this as a parable. Marvellously instructive is the figure here used. Its great leading lesson is that of the spiritual unity between Christ and His Church. When Christ says, "I am the true Vine", He speaks of stem and branches together, joining His people in a blessed oneness with Himself. His Church is His Body, and this He counts as part of Himself (See this truth most strongly asserted by St. Paul, under the image of the marriage union, in Eph. v. 30.). Under the Old Covenant the Jewish people were God's Vine (See Ps. lxxx, and Is. v. 1—7.). Now Christ declares that they were but a type of the "true Vine",—even Himself and His Church, in which the ancient types and shadows found their fulfilment and reality. We must not omit to notice the bearing which this solemn discourse on union with Christ has upon the great sacramental act of union but just before instituted. Although St. John gives no account of that institution itself, yet none other utters such profound teaching upon the very central truth of the Holy Communion as he who records the Sermon on the Bread of Life at Capernaum (in vi.), and the parable of the True Vine.

"My Father is the Husbandman." That is, the Lord or Owner of the vineyard, at whose will, and for whose glory, it exists. The same comparison is made in the parable of the Barren Fig-tree (See St. Luke xiii. 6—9.).

2. "Every branch in Me" &c. Note well that there are branches *in Christ* which bear not fruit. Every baptized Christian has been *grafted* into Christ,—made a branch in His Vine. We say in our Catechism that in Baptism we are made *members* of Christ. We might express exactly the same truth by saying we are made *branches* of Christ. For what the member is to the body, the branch is to the tree. And just as there are sickly, helpless, or unruly members in the Body, so are there sickly, barren, or wanton branches in the Vine. It is not every

taketh away: and every *branch* that beareth fruit, A.D. 30.
He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.
3 [b] Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.
4 [c] Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch

[b] ch. 13. 10. & 17. 17. Eph. 5. 26. 1 Pet. 1. 22.
[c] Col. 1. 23. 1 John 2. 6.

graft that lives, nor every one that lives that thrives, nor every one that lives and thrives for a time that ends in bearing good fruit. What the good fruit is we learn from St. Paul's list of the "fruit of the Spirit" (See Gal. v. 22, 23.). The barren branches God "taketh away." This is the "Cut it down" of the Barren Fig-tree. But how fearful is that which is meant by this "taketh away"! This is unfolded farther on (See 6.).

"He purgeth it," &c. Literally, 'cleanseth it.' The fruitful branch is not let alone. In a fruitful tree we see the gardener prune and cut back the strongest shoots; he cleans off the blight, and cuts out the canker. An ignorant person might think he was injuring the tree. But we know he does it "that it may bring forth more fruit." So God deals with the branches in His Vine. If they are bearing fruit, He checks and prunes and purges them, often using sharp and painful means, cutting off health or comfort or this world's goods, taking away the dearest objects of love, and thus chastening and humbling them. This *outward* purging is very wholesome, and often necessary before the branch is really as fruitful as it should be. But we must not forget that God has also an *inward* purging for His branches, a secret discipline and training, a cleansing through His word and its searching power, of which we read in the next verse.

3. "Now ye are clean" &c. Literally, 'Already are ye clean.' So Christ had declared at the washing of the feet (See xiii. 10.), and He speaks in the same sense here. He does not mean, 'Already ye are 'purged and cleansed so as to bring forth that more abundant fruit, of 'which I spake', for there was much purging still in store for them: but, 'Ye have indeed been already once cleansed'—'Ye are grafted as 'clean pure branches into Me—therefore' (in the next word) '"Abide."' May not this be understood: 'Ye *have been justified; persevere*, and in '*sanctification* bring forth much fruit'? But their cleansing was "through "the word", that is, not any one special saying of Christ, but through His teaching. This begot in them the faith which brought them to Him for the cleansing of justification. And, we may well observe, this word is also God's instrument (under the Holy Spirit) of sanctification, for Christ prayed, "Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy "word is truth" (xvii. 17.). We must weigh with the present passage St. Paul's words, in which he says that "Christ also loved the Church, "and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it "with the washing of water by the word" (Ephes. v. 25, 26.).

4. "Abide in Me." By grace are we called: our work is to make our "calling and election sure" (2 St. Pet. i. 10.). We are branches; our work is to abide in the Vine. The true position of the Christian is rather that of one fighting lest he lose the blessed inheritance which has been given him, than that of one fighting in the hope of at length winning a place in the kingdom of heaven. He is already a child of God, an heir of the kingdom, a sheep of the fold, a branch of the Vine. The command he needs is, "Abide in Me."

"And I in you." That is, 'And so shall I abide in you.' We

A.D. 30. cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me.

5 I am the Vine, ye *are* the branches: He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much [d] fruit: for [2] without Me ye can do nothing.

6 If a man abide not in Me, [e] he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast *them* into the fire, and they are burned.

7 If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you,

[d] Hos. 14. 8. Phil. 1. 11. & 4. 13.
[2] Or, *severed from me*, Acts 4. 12.
[e] Matt. 3. 10. & 7. 19.

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abide in Christ by cleaving to Him in faith love and obedience. He abides in us by imparting to us His grace, and giving life to our souls. Perhaps we could not select a better place than this for calling attention to the wonderful frequency of the expression '*in Christ*' throughout the Epistles. The Epistle to the Ephesians especially abounds with the expression, every spiritual blessing being spoken of as bestowed '*in Christ*' (See especially the first chapter.). In this place we learn something of the *nature* of this most blessed union, of which the fruits are so manifold.

"As the branch." The branch has no free will to sever itself, as man has. But it may be torn from the tree, and then it dies, because the sap can no longer flow into it from the stem. So when a man severs himself from Christ he breaks the channels of spiritual life, and spiritually dies. The sap of the tree represents that inner life which flows from Christ to all His branches: and what is this but the Holy Spirit?

5. "I am the Vine," &c. If we distinguish here between the vine and the branches, the vine would mean the stem of the tree, from which the branches draw their life and strength. But it is better to understand by the vine the whole tree, including the branches (See on 1.), for the Christian is in very truth a part of Christ—a member of Christ—even as the branch is a part of the tree.

"Without Me." This does not simply mean 'without My help', but 'apart from—that is, severed from—Me.' It is the same thought as that which is expressed in the latter part of the 4th verse, only more strongly stated, for here the utter helplessness for good of the man who is not in Christ is most plainly declared.

6. "As a branch." That is, 'as a branch broken off from the tree.'

"Withered;" &c. An awful picture of the end of the man who has forsaken Christ! There is first the spiritual death—the withering; then the eternal death—the burning.

7. "If ye abide in Me," &c. Jesus now leaves the figure, and speaks in plain language, though the figure is still present to His mind, and re-appears in the mention of bearing fruit (8 and 16.). Observe here instead of saying '*I* in you', our Lord says "*My words* abide in you." This is one sign and fruit of Christ's abiding in us. When He is in us, His words are very dear to us, and we love to keep His commandments. It is then that our prayers are heard and answered. Nor can we doubt that St. John was thinking of this gracious promise, when he said, "Whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His "commandments" (1 St. John iii. 22.). When Christ promises, "Ye "shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you", we must

[f] ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. A.D. 30.

8 [g] Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; [h] so shall ye be My disciples.

9 As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you: continue ye in My love.

10 [i] If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love.

[f] ver. 16. ch. 14. 13, 14. & 16. 23.
[g] Matt. 5. 16. Phil. 1. 11.
[h] ch. 8. 31. & 13. 35.
[i] ch. 14. 15, 21, 23.

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remember that all such promises concerning prayer are limited by God's will (See on xiv. 13.). Indeed the Evangelist himself most plainly says so in another place, when he writes, "This is the confidence that we "have in Him, that, if we ask any thing *according to His will*, He "heareth us" (1 St. John v. 14.). It appears moreover that the prayers here spoken of are closely connected with the bearing of fruit, and, if so, are to be understood as petitions for spiritual rather than for temporal blessings. Let us not fail to notice that in the words "what ye will" the true desire of the heart is implied. How many pray without any real wish that their prayers may be granted! This is no true prayer. "They whose hearts desire nothing pray for nothing" (*Bishop Wilson.*).

8. "Herein" &c. The word "Herein" belongs to what follows, not to what goes before. The sense is, 'My Father is glorified in this—'namely that ye bear much fruit.' Christ taught us to pray to the Father, and say, "Hallowed be Thy Name." Do we ask, '*How* shall 'we hallow God's Name?' Here is an answer:—'By bearing much 'fruit'; for so shall men "see your good works, and glorify your Father "which is in heaven" (St. Matt. v. 16.).

"So shall ye be My disciples." That is, by bearing the good fruit. This alone will prove us to be Christ's true disciples, for He has "chosen" and "ordained" us for the very purpose that we should bear fruit (See on 16.).

9. "As the Father" &c. How wondrous must be Christ's love to "His own" to be compared with the Father's love to Him! If "God "so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son" (iii. 16.) to die for the world, what must be His love for that only-begotten Son Himself! Yet no less is that Son's love for His sinful servants.

"Continue ye in My love." The word "Continue" is the same which is translated "Abide" in the former verses. But "when Christ "says, 'Abide ye in My love', it is not plain what love He means, "whether that by which we love Him or that by which He loves us. "Yet it is decided by the foregoing words: for He had said 'So have "'I loved you'; and then adds, 'Abide ye in My love': therefore it "is in that love with which He loveth us" (*St. Augustine.*). This command then signifies, 'Take heed lest ye lose the love which I have be-'stowed upon you.'

10. "If ye keep" &c. Thus is the keeping of Christ's commandments not only the only proof of our love to Him (See xiv. 15.), but also the only way to retain His love to us.

"Even as I" &c. The Son, perfectly fulfilling the Father's will, abides in the perfect enjoyment of the Father's love (See on v. 18. St. Augustine's rule for understanding such sayings as this.).

11 These things have I spoken unto you, that
k ch. 16. 24. & 17. 13. 1 John 1. 4. My joy might remain in you, and k *that* your joy
l ch. 13. 34. 1 Thes. 4. 9. might be full.
1 Pet. 4. 8. 1 John 3. 11. & 4. 21. 12 l This is My commandment, That ye love one
another, as I have loved you.
m ch. 10. 11, 15. Rom. 5. 7, 8. Eph. 5. 2. 1 John 3. 16. 13 m Greater love hath no man than this, that a
man lay down his life for his friends.
n See Matt. 12. 50. ch. 14. 15, 23. 14 n Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I
command you.

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11. "That My joy" &c. "The joy of Christ is His own sacred "bliss, the joy of the holy Son in the consciousness of the love of God, "and of His unity with the Father" (*Lücke quoted by Stier.*). This great joy Christ imparts to "His own", so that it is *in them*, the fountain of their own "joy" "in believing" (Rom. xv. 13.). Thus does Christ fulfil His own command, "Let not your heart be troubled" (xiv. 1.). The heart cannot be greatly troubled in which Christ's joy abides.

"That your joy" &c. This means, 'that your own peace and happiness, being raised and perfected by the indwelling of Mine, may be 'full'—as full, that is, as may be in this world where there must still be 'tribulation" (xvi. 33.). Let us not forget that it is written of the blessedness of Christ's kingdom *in this world* that "Eye hath not seen, "nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things "which God hath prepared for them that love Him", for St. Paul continues, "But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit" (1 Cor. ii. 9, 10.).

Observe that this beautiful verse concerning joy springs out of the thought of abiding in Christ's love. It is because of that, His measureless love to us, that He imparts to us of His joy, and it is the knowledge of that same love which is the source of our joy.

12. "That ye love one another." A repetition of the great "new "commandment" (See on xiii. 34.) in order to its fuller explanation in the following verses. Christ has spoken of His disciples abiding in His love. This they cannot do except by keeping His commandments. And they cannot keep His commandments except by loving one another, for "love is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. xiii. 10.). So the love of Christians to one another flows naturally out of the love of Christ to them.

13. "Greater love" &c. "But God commendeth His love toward "us, in that, while we were yet sinners" ("*enemies*" in 10.) "Christ "died for us" (Rom. v. 8.). And this love seems greater still. Yet it is the same love of which Christ speaks, for He that died for His friends died also for His enemies. In this place however He is not thinking of His enemies, but rather of His special love to those whom He deigns to call His "friends". No man, He argues, can show greater love to His friends than by dying for them; and this, which is the proof of Christ's love, is to be the pattern of ours, for "Hereby "perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us: "and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 St. John iii. 16.).

14. "Ye are My friends." 'Blessed they to whom such words are

15 Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; [o] for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you. A.D. 30.

16 [p] Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and [q] ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain: that [r] whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in My name, He may give it you.

[o] See Gen. 18. 17. ch. 17. 26. Acts 20. 27.

[p] ch. 6. 70. & 13. 18. 1 Joh. 4. 10. 19.

[q] Mat. 28. 19. Mark 16. 15. Col. 1. 6.

[r] ver. 7. ch. 14. 13.

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spoken! True there is a condition—that of obedience. But the Apostles themselves were weak and faulty. All forsook their Lord in fear at His betrayal: one denied Him thrice. Yet He calls them "friends." So their falls are our comfort; for He that accepted their faulty obedience, and called them "friends", will not refuse to grant to us, if we are striving to obey Him, the same blessed title.

15. **"Henceforth" &c.** It is true that even before this Jesus had addressed His disciples as "My friends" (St. Luke xii. 4.). But this was only a passing word of love. For the most part they had been rather servants than friends. They called Him "Master", and looked up to Him with reverence and awe. Now in His love He draws them closer, lifts them nearer, to Himself.

"The servant knoweth not" &c. The proof that Christ really looked upon His Apostles as His friends was His treatment of them. His language to them was not that of a master giving his servants their necessary orders, but the free and kindly intercourse of friend with friend.

16. **"Ye have not chosen" &c.** This verse is a safeguard against all pride. What if they are friends? And what if they do what He commands them? And what if they bring forth much fruit? And what if He opens to them the divine mysteries? Is any of this their own doing? Is it not all His? Yes, the election, and the power to bear fruit, and the grace to persevere, are His—not theirs. Observe that our Saviour says that He has chosen His disciples that they may bear fruit. In other words He has chosen them unto holiness as the middle stage between their calling and their glory. So St. Paul writes, "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation "through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth" (2 Thess. ii. 13.).

"Ordained." This has no reference to ordination to the work of the ministry. It would be better translated, as it simply means, 'appointed'.

"That your fruit should remain." This may mean either 'that 'your fruit should be of that nature which would endure the trial, and 'be found true and worthy fruit in the last day', or 'that you may 'continue to produce pure good fruit, persevering to the end, and not 'growing weary of well-doing.'

"That whatsoever" &c. This is another end and result of Christ's choice. The prayers of His friends are heard and answered. This blessing appears here to depend upon the bringing forth fruit (as upon

A.D. 30. 17 [s] These things I command you, that ye love
[s] ver. 12. one another.

[t] 1 John 3. 1, 13. 18 [t] If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before *it hated* you.

[u] 1 John 4. 5. 19 [u] If ye were of the world, the world would love
[x] ch. 17. 14. his own: but [x] because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

20 Remember the word that I said unto you,
[y] Mat. 10. 24. Luke 6. 40. ch. 13. 16. [y] The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you;
[z] Ezek. 3. 7. [z] if they have kept My saying, they will keep your's
[a] Mat. 10. 22. & 24. 9. ch. 16. 3. also.

21 But [a] all these things will they do unto you

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the abiding in Christ, in 7.), and indeed this is true, not because the fruit, however good, can deserve to win answers to prayer, but because it is an evidence of that state of heart, and of that union with Christ, to which God vouchsafes such answers.

17. "**These things**" &c. Once again our Lord enforces His great "new commandment" (See on 12.). By "these things" our Lord means all He had spoken concerning His love to His friends. The end and object of this was that they might learn how to love one another. The word "command" here seems used in a rather unusual sense, meaning 'declare' or 'enforce upon you'.

18. "**If the world hate you,**" &c. This follows most naturally upon the mention of love to one another. The Christian will strive to love all. He knows no limits which he may set to his love. Yet he will not always be met by answering love. The world—that is, the evil in the world—will only have hatred to repay (See on vii. 7.). But is this surprising? If the pure and perfect love of Christ Himself only aroused the hatred and enmity of the world, His disciples cannot expect to be otherwise dealt with.

19. "**If ye were of the world,**" &c. It is the *separation* of Christians from the world,—their opposition to its ways and habits and pursuits,—which arouses its enmity. Like their Master, while not shrinking from kindly intercourse with any, they are ever, by their pure conduct and high motives and holy lives, a rebuke (even if a silent one) to the wicked.

20. "**The servant**" &c. This saying is used by our Lord in the same sense as in this place in His directions to His Apostles on first sending them forth (See on St. Matt. x. 24.). It is used in a different sense at the washing of their feet but just before the uttering of the present words (See on xiii. 14.).

"**If they have kept**" &c. Christ does not mean to imply that "the world" had kept His saying—that is, His word. He only puts the two sides before the Apostles as the two ways in which the world might have received Him, saying as it were, 'Ye have seen in which 'of these two ways they have treated Me; ye can judge then in which 'to expect to be treated yourselves.'

for My name's sake, because they know not Him that sent Me. A.D. 30.

22 [b] If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: [c] but now they have no [2] cloke for their sin.

23 [d] He that hateth Me hateth My Father also.

24 If I had not done among them [e] the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both Me and My Father.

25 But *this cometh to pass*, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, **They hated Me without a cause.**

26 [f] But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, *even* the Spirit

[b] ch. 9. 41.
[c] Rom. 1. 20. James 4. 17.
[2] Or, *excuse.*
[d] 1 John 2. 23.
[e] ch. 3. 2. & 7. 31. & 9. 32.
Ps. 69. 4.
[f] Luke 24. 49. ch. 14. 17, 26. & 16. 7, 13. Acts 2. 33.

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21. "**For My name's sake.**" Most literally true in the fiery persecutions of the early church. True also in a somewhat different sense even now. For the hatred and enmity of bad men to good springs from their hatred and enmity to all that purity and heavenliness and unselfishness which are summed up in Christ.

"**Because they know not.**" And yet, as our Lord goes on to show, they are without excuse, for they *might* have known. Even the very heathen, St. Paul says, are "without excuse" (Rom. i. 20.) in their blindness, because that blindness was of their own causing. How much more they to whom the Son of God Himself came and spoke!

22. "**No cloke.**" That is, 'no excuse,'—nothing to cover them, and to render their sin less hateful. Christ Himself throws this "cloke" over those ancient heathen cities, which had never heard His voice, saying it shall be more tolerable for them in the day of judgment than for such as these spoken of in this verse (See St. Matt. x. 15. xi. 20—24.). The sin here spoken of seems to be specially that of hatred towards Christ and His disciples. And this sin is aggravated by the truth stated in the next verse.

24. "**Both Me and My Father.**" Because He was the Revealer of the Father to man; and, inasmuch as He was "the express Image" of the Father (Heb. i. 3.), it was impossible to hate Him, and love the Father. In seeing and hating the "Image" they saw and hated Him whose Image He was.

25. "**They hated Me without a cause.**" The words are doubtless taken from that Psalm which is so full of the sufferings of Christ, the 69th. There the Psalmist complains, "They that hate me without a "cause are more than the hairs of my head." How much truer was this of Christ, the "despised and rejected of men"! (Compare Ps. xxxv. 19.)

26. "**Whom I will send**" &c. This verse has been one upon the true sense of which great controversy has existed. The question whether the Holy Ghost should be spoken of as proceeding "from the "Father" only, as the Eastern Churches hold, or as proceeding "from "the Father *and the Son*", as the Western Churches hold, has been the cause of the greatest schism the Church has ever known. Up-

A. D. 30. of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, [g] He
[g] 1 John 5. 6. shall testify of Me:
[h] Luke 24. 48. Acts 1. 8, 21, 22. & 2. 32. & 3. 15. & 4. 20, 33. & 5. 32. & 10. 39. & 13. 31. 27 and [h] ye also shall bear witness, because [i] ye have been with Me from the beginning.
1 Pet. 5. 1. 2 Pet. 1. 16. [i] Luke 1. 2. 1 John 1. 1, 2.

CHAPTER XVI.

1 *Christ comforteth His disciples against tribulation by the promise of the Holy Ghost, and by His Resurrection and Ascension:* 23 *assureth their prayers made in His name to be acceptable to His Father.* 23 *Peace in Christ, and in the world affliction.*

[a] Matt. 11. 6. & 24. 10. & 26. 31. THESE things have I spoken unto you, that ye [a] should not be offended.

doubtedly the Western Churches have without due authority added the words "*and the Son*" to the original Nicene Creed, but, since Christ speaks so plainly here (and in xvi. 7.) of sending the Holy Ghost, and since the Holy Ghost is called "the Spirit of Christ" (Rom. viii. 9. 1 St. Peter i. 11.), no real objection can be made to the words. It should however be observed that the word "proceeding" is always understood as meaning more than merely 'sent' or 'coming'. It is used as expressing the *relation* of the Holy Ghost to the other Persons of the Holy Trinity. Just as we hold that the Son is "begotten of "His Father before all worlds", so we hold that the Holy Ghost "pro-"ceedeth from the Father and the Son", or as the Athanasian Creed more fully expresses it, "The Holy Ghost is of the Father and of the "Son: neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but *proceeding*."

When Christ promises to send the Comforter from the Father, we are reminded of the prophetic words of David, who sang, "Thou hast "ascended on high, Thou hast led captivity captive: Thou hast re-"ceived gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God "might dwell among them" (Ps. lxviii. 18.). St. Paul in quoting these words, instead of "received gifts for men", has "gave gifts unto men" (Eph. iv. 8.), the full truth being that, when Christ ascended, He received from the Father the gifts which He gave to His Church, the greatest of which was the gift of "the Lord God" the Holy Spirit to "dwell among them".

"He shall testify of Me." The Holy Spirit's great work was, and is, to bear witness to Christ, teaching men to know Him, and the way of life through Him (See on xvi. 8—10.).

27. **"Ye also shall bear witness,"** &c. This is spoken in its literal sense only to the Apostles, for they alone had been with Christ "from the beginning", that is, from the beginning of His public work and ministry among men, which had lasted now more than three years. They, with the Holy Ghost to teach them, would be Christ's witnesses to the world. But may we not apply the words to ourselves in a very true, though less literal, sense? Ought we not to be witnesses to Christ before the world because we have been with Him, in holy meditation and prayer, in study of His Divine Example, in seeking His presence in His House and Sacraments?

CHAPTER XVI.

Final Discourse continued.

1. **"These things."** That is, the foretelling of the world's hatred,

2 [b]They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, [c]that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. A.D. 30.

3 And [d]these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor Me.

4 But [e]these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And [f]these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you.

5 But now [g]I go My way to Him that sent Me; and none of you asketh Me, Whither goest Thou?

[b] ch. 9. 22, 34. & 12. 42.
[c] Acts 8. 1. & 9. 1. & 26. 9, 10, 11.
[d] ch. 15. 21. Rom. 10. 2. 1 Cor. 2. 8. 1 Tim. 1. 13.
[e] ch. 13. 19. & 14. 29.
[f] See Matt. 9. 15.
[g] ver. 10, 16. ch. 7. 33. & 13. 3. & 14. 28.

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but perhaps also including the promise of the Comforter. The knowledge that their persecutions were foretold by their Lord, and the presence of the promised support under them, would prevent these persecutions from causing them to stumble (See, for the meaning of "offend," on St. Matt. v. 29. xvii. 27.).

2. **"Put you out of the synagogues."** The Jewish excommunication (See on ix. 22.).

"Doeth God service." So thought St. Paul in his ignorance before his conversion (See Acts xxvi. 9.). Yet there were differences in the guilt of those who thus acted, according to the amount of light rejected. St. Paul had more "cloke for his sin" (See on xv. 22.) than those to whom Christ Himself had already "come and spoken", and therefore he "obtained mercy" (See 1 Tim. i. 13.).

3. **"Because they have not known" &c.** Some, like the Pharisees, refusing to know and shutting their eyes to the light; others, like Saul before his conversion, ready to know as soon as the light shone upon them.

4. **"These things I said not" &c.** Our Lord had told His disciples of coming persecution before (See St. Matt. x. 16—28.). But He had not before declared the deep ground of the world's enmity, namely ignorance of the Father and of Himself, nor so plainly prepared His disciples for the immediate approach of persecution, nor bound up His words of sad prediction with others of blessed strength in the promise of the Divine Comforter. While He was still with them, He was their Strength and Comforter, and persecution seemed either in the distant future, or endurable when shared with Him.

5, 6. **"None of you asketh" &c.** They *had* asked this question (See xiii. 36. xiv. 5.), though with so much blindness and ignorance in the asking that they had received no clear answer as yet. Now the time was come when they might learn the truth, if they cared. But they were so overwhelmed with simple sorrow at the thought of their Lord's departure that they could not imagine that in that very departure there could be any thing to calm their trouble. It is as though Christ said, 'If, instead of giving way to your grief, you only cared to 'enquire whither I am going, and for what purpose, you would find 'reason to hope, and not to despair' (See on xiv. 28.). Yet He speaks not in reproof so much as in love, as His next words show.

A.D. 30. 6 But because I have said these things unto you,
h ver. 22. ch. 14. 1. [h] sorrow hath filled your heart.
7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away,
i ch. 7. 39. & 14. 16, 26. & 15. 26. [i] the Comforter will not come unto you; but [k] if I depart, I will send Him unto you.
k Acts 2. 33. Eph. 4. 8. 8 And when He is come, He will [2] reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:
2 Or, *convince.*

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7. "Nevertheless." That is, 'Though ye are too sorrowful to ask 'Me, yet I tell you.'

"It is expedient" &c. "Expedient" means 'good' or 'profit-'able,' and Christ's departure was profitable for His disciples, because otherwise the Comforter would not come. Two things were needed before the gift of the Comforter could be bestowed: 1. that Christ should *die*, thus winning for His Church all gifts and blessings; 2. that He should *ascend* thither whence He would send the promised Gift from the Father. But the main truth in this verse is a very startling one. It is simply this—that it is better to have the Holy Spirit with us than to have Christ. Why is this? Not because the Holy Ghost is greater than the Son. But because it was necessary to raise the disciples into a more spiritual life and more spiritual thoughts, and (as St. Augustine says) while they carnally clung to Christ's Bodily presence, they could not receive the Spirit. Their thoughts of Christ were still far too earthly, and they were hindered by their very love to His Person from rising to a more spiritual view of His nature and office. They needed the same lesson which was taught to the sorrowing Magdalene in the mysterious words, "Touch Me not, for I am not yet ascended unto "My Father" (See on xx. 17.). On the coming of the Comforter Alford well remarks that "this saying of our Lord is a convincing "proof that the gift of the Spirit at and since the Day of Pentecost "was, and is, something *totally distinct* from any thing before that time: "—a new and loftier dispensation." The Spirit was in the world before, but never in such gracious power, nor as the guiding and enlightening Presence with God's people.

8. "He will reprove the world" &c. The translators of our Bible have given the word "convince" in the margin as another translation of the word which they have expressed by "reprove" in the text. Perhaps "convince" is the better word of the two, especially as "re-"prove" seems used in a sense not usual in these days, namely as meaning 'prove against,' or 'convict.' It is the same word which is translated 'convince' in the words, "Which of you convinceth Me of "sin"—that is, 'proveth any sin against Me?' (See on viii. 46.).

In this short verse is described by our Lord the great work of the Holy Ghost the Comforter in the world. This work is to "convince "the world." "The same world which cannot *receive* the Spirit, because "it seeth Him not nor knoweth Him, must nevertheless become con-"scious that He is working upon it, speaking to it, and chiefly—*testi-"fying against it*" (*Stier.*). The three things of which the Holy Ghost convinces will be best considered under the next three verses. It must

9 [l] of sin, because they believe not on Me; A.D. 30.
10 [m] of righteousness, [n] because I go to My Father, and ye see Me no more;

[l] Acts 2. 22, —37.
[m] Acts 2. 32.
[n] ch. 3. 14. & 5. 32.

however be observed that in each case the conviction is two-fold in its effect, being either, by its acceptance, the means of conversion and salvation, or, by its rejection, the occasion of hardening and destruction. Indeed this is the law of all great privileges. They are ever mighty to save or to destroy. Christ Himself is to one a "chief corner stone, "elect, precious", to another "a stone of stumbling and a rock of of-"fence" (1 St. Pet. ii. 6—8. See also on xii. 31.); and His Gospel is to the one "the savour of death unto death", and to the other "the savour "of life unto life" (2 Cor. ii. 16.). So too with the work of the Holy Spirit. It convinces unto salvation, or convicts unto condemnation.

9. "Of sin," &c. The first work of the Holy Spirit is to convince the world of sin. But it will be at once remembered that this is the very office and work of the *Law* under the old covenant, for "by the "law is the knowledge of sin" (Rom. iii. 20.). The strictness of God's Law taught man his own sinfulness and weakness, and thus "the "law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ" (Gal. iii. 24.). Besides this, man had already, even without the law, the witness of conscience to his own sinfulness (See Rom. ii. 15.). Thus we must beware of saying that the Holy Spirit came to do only that which God's law or the natural conscience did already. The truth is, we must read this verse as a whole, and take the second part of it as describing the special sin of which the Holy Ghost convinces. The word "because" may quite properly be understood as 'namely that' in each of these three verses. So that here we learn that the Holy Ghost convinces the world of sin, *namely that* they believe not in Christ. This unbelief is, in truth, the root and fountain of all sin, just as faith is of all holiness. For unbelief (like faith) is not purely of the head. Its seat is quite as much in the heart. It is very seldom that unbelief may not be traced to some sinful temper or habit or state of mind, such as pride, or sloth, or worldliness. And when we speak of unbelief, we must not limit our thoughts to actual rejection of Christ or of His words, but must include that *practical* unbelief, which is far more common in these days, and which is rather indifference, and unconcern, and the absence of any deep earnest conviction, than the positive denial of any revealed truth.

10. "Of righteousness," &c. Of what "righteousness" is the Holy Ghost to "convince the world"? Not of its own, for it has none. Therefore certainly, in the first place, of *Christ's* righteousness. And in truth the leading men to discern the wonderful perfection of Christ's righteousness, which is their example, is one work of the Holy Spirit. But there would be little strength and comfort in being convinced of one's own sin and of Another's righteousness: and still less to have added to this the conviction of a righteous "judgment" (ver. 11.). The conviction of Christ's righteousness would only make the conviction of our own sin more terrible, if this were all. Therefore the "righteous-"ness" here spoken of must be, not simply Christ's sinless perfection, but that righteousness which He wrought *for us*,—His *justifying* righteousness,—those merits for the sake of which we are accounted righteous before God by faith. Thus this expression answers to, or rather

A. D. 30. 11 [o] of judgment, because [p] the prince of this world is judged.

12 I have yet many things to say unto you, [q] but ye cannot bear them now.

[o] Acts 26. 18.
[p] Luke 10. 18. ch. 12. 31. Eph. 2. 2. Col. 2. 15. Heb. 2. 14.
[q] Mark 4. 33. 1 Cor. 3. 2. Heb. 5. 12.

embraces within itself, "the righteousness of God, which is by faith of "Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all them that believe" (Rom. iii. 22.). But this righteousness is explained in the words, "Because"—or, 'namely that'—"I go to the Father, and ye see Me no more." How is this? Partly, because this would prove Him who was "despised and "rejected of men" to be none other than the spotless Son of God. But still more because the full accomplishment of the great work of the Atonement would make Christ to be "the Lord our righteousness" (Jer. xxiii. 6.). The words of Luther on this place are worth recording. "We must know no other righteousness, with which we can stand before "God, than this *going of Christ to the Father;* which is no other than "that He hath taken our sin upon His own back, and for the sake of it "hath suffered the death of the cross, been buried, and descended into "hell; not remaining however under the power of sin and death and "hell, but passing through them all in His Resurrection and Ascen-"sion."

11. "Of judgment," &c. The "judgment" here spoken of is not to be limited to the great Judgment of the last day. It rather refers to the righteous severance which God is ever making between the godly and the wicked, defending and rewarding the one, casting down and condemning the other. The conviction of "judgment" is well described in the Psalmist's words, "So that a man shall say, verily there is a reward "for the righteous: verily He is a God that judgeth in the earth" (Ps. lviii. 11.). It convinces the world that evil shall not prevail, nor go unpunished, and that the victory of good over evil is certain. And this conviction is said to be, "because," or 'namely that'—"the prince of "this world is judged"; that is, that the power and dominion of Satan is already cast down. We cannot read these words without remembering a like saying of our Lord in His conversation when certain Greeks sought to see Him, "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the "prince of this world be cast out" (xii. 31. See on this verse for a fuller comment on the present.).

We must not forget to note the advancing stages of the three convictions of the Holy Spirit. First, the sinner is convinced of sin, seeing its hatefulness and hopelessness. Secondly, the sinner, made conscious of his sin, is led to seek salvation from his sin through Christ's righteousness. Thirdly, being justified by faith in Christ, he learns to feel a blessed assurance that the cause of Christ must prevail, and that, as Satan's power has been already cast down, he—the prince of darkness—and all the evil of which he is the author, shall at last be utterly cast forth from the kingdom of God. (The thoughtful reader may like to trace out the same advancing stages—from the deep consciousness of sin, through deliverance in Christ, to faith in the final triumph—as drawn out in Romans vii. and viii.)

12. "Yet many things." Namely those deeper and more heavenly truths concerning Himself and His kingdom, which the earthly notions of the Apostles hindered their receiving until endued with power from

13 Howbeit when He, [r]the Spirit of truth, is come, [s]He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, *that* shall He speak: and He will shew you things to come. A.D. 30.

[r] ch. 14. 17. & 15. 26.
[s] ch. 14. 26. 1 John 2. 20, 27.

14 He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and shall shew *it* unto you.

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on high. They were as yet too weak to bear these more spiritual truths. They would have been to them like the new cloth in the old garment, or the new wine in the old bottles (See on St. Matt. ix. 16, 17.).

13. "He will guide you" &c. The Holy Ghost would reveal to the Apostles those truths which as yet they could not bear. Thus in their writings we may be sure that we have the full declaration of "all truth". Moreover, this promise being made to the Apostles, we must believe the revelation of the truth to them to have been *complete*, and reject the idea of farther revelations of the truth, or new disclosures of it, in after ages.

"He shall not speak" &c. Christ had said of Himself, "I can of "Mine own self do nothing: as I hear I judge" (v. 30.); "My doctrine "is not Mine, but His that sent Me" (vii. 16.); with other like words (See viii. 26, 28. xii. 50. xiv. 31.). What Christ thus spoke of Himself, He now says of the Holy Ghost. The Son is of the Father, and so derives from Him His wisdom: the Holy Ghost is of the Father and the Son, and so derives from Them His wisdom.

"Things to come." We see the fulfilment of this promise in such prophecies as those of St. Paul in the 2nd Epistle to the Thessalonians, and St. Peter in his 2nd Epistle, but still more in those of the Book of the Revelation of St. John.

14. "He shall glorify Me." As the work of the Son was to glorify the Father (See viii. 49.), so the work of the Spirit was to glorify the Son. And this is the best test of all work and of all teaching which professes to be of the Spirit. If it glorifies Christ, we dare not lightly condemn it. If it does not glorify Christ, we must at once suspect it of another origin. It is not hard to apply this test to the vain reasonings of half-believers on the one side, or to the errors of Rome on the other. But, if the Spirit's work be to glorify Christ, let us ever remember that this is done not only by the Spirit's witness to Christ in the teaching of God's word or of the Church, but in that witness which is borne by the holy lives of those in whom the Spirit has wrought a likeness to Christ. This work of the Spirit is clearly described by St. Paul, who says, "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass "the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory "to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor. iii. 18.).

"He shall receive of Mine," &c. The word "Mine" here is of very wide significance. It seems to embrace our Lord's whole Nature, and Work, and Teaching, concerning all which the Holy Ghost would enlighten the minds of the Apostles after Pentecost, so as to make them faithful witnesses of the truth. Again what a pledge we have here of the *fulness* and *completeness* (See on 13.) of the witness borne to the things of Christ by the inspired writers of the New Testament! Who

A.D. 30. 15 [t] All things that the Father hath are Mine: therefore said I, that He shall take of Mine, and shall shew *it* unto you.

16 [u] A little while, and ye shall not see Me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see Me, [x] because I go to the Father.

t Mat. 11. 27. ch. 3. 35. & 13. 3. & 17. 10.
u ver. 10. ch. 7. 33. & 13. 33. & 14. 19.
x ver. 28. ch. 13. 3.

can think that, if the Holy Spirit led them into all truth, showing unto them the things of Christ, their writings can fail to contain (as our Church teaches in her 6th Article) "all things necessary to salvation"?

15. "All things that the Father hath" &c. This mysterious verse declares, first of all, the unity of the Father and the Son. There is nothing belonging to the Father—no glory of Godhead, no Divine attribute, no dignity of power, no wealth of wisdom,—which does not equally belong to the Son. Secondly, it teaches that when the Holy Ghost takes of the things belonging to Christ and reveals them to His servants, that Holy Spirit is in very truth revealing the things belonging to the Father also. He is the Spirit of God—that is, of God the Father and of God the Son, proceeding from Both, and revealing Both to man. It is through the teaching of this Divine Teacher that men are brought "to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and "of the Father, and of Christ: in whom are hid all the treasures of "wisdom and knowledge" (Col. ii. 2, 3.).

16. "A little while," &c. The first and simplest meaning of this saying is that which explains it of the Death and Resurrection of our Lord, and this meaning our Lord seems Himself to give to His words (See 20.). And if it were not for the strange reason given, "Because "I go to the Father", this would be sufficient. But how could Christ's going to the Father be the cause of His being quickly seen again? And how could He speak of His Death as going to the Father (See xx. 17.)? Surely this cannot be *all* the meaning of our Lord's saying. He seems to have still in mind the *spiritual* sight which the Holy Spirit would bestow (See 14, 15.), and of which He spoke earlier in this great discourse, when He said, "I will manifest Myself to him" (xiv. 21.). And this would be granted when He sent the Comforter from the Father (See 7.) on the Day of Pentecost. This spiritual sight, like the spiritual touch spoken of to St. Mary Magdalene (See on xx. 17.), could not be till Christ went to the Father. Both parts of the saying have thus their double fulfilment. 1. "Ye shall not see "Me" was fulfilled when, a few hours afterwards, His Body was laid in the tomb; it was further fulfilled when, forty-two days afterwards, He left the world and went to the Father. 2. "Ye shall see Me" was fulfilled when, on the Day of the Resurrection Christ appeared to the assembled Apostles: it was further fulfilled when, after His Ascension, He came (as He still comes) by the Spirit, to manifest Himself to His own, and to reveal Himself to the eye of faith. Happy are they who can say, like the patriarch, "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of

16. "*See Me.*" Two different words are used in the original, both in this verse and in the next, for "see". The first "see" signifies 'gaze upon,'—'behold', and seems used of the earnest gaze of the bodily eye upon one deeply loved. The second word is that commonly used for 'see', and has here a wide meaning, including the spiritual sight of faith.

17 Then said *some* of His disciples among themselves, What is this that He saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see Me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see Me: and, Because I go to the Father? A.D. 30.

18 They said therefore, What is this that He saith, A little while? we cannot tell what He saith.

19 Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask Him, and said unto them, Do ye enquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see Me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see Me?

20 Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.

21 [y] A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, [y] Isai. 26. 17.

"the ear; but now mine eye seeth Thee" (Job xlii. 5.)! St. Augustine takes the view above given, saying of this verse, "It may be understood "first of Christ's Death and of the joy of the disciples in His Resur-"rection. But it is better and far more perfectly fulfilled in His "Ascension—the "little while" of the Church's travail. It seems "long to us, because it is yet going on: when it shall be ended, we "shall feel how little it has been."

20. **"Ye shall weep" &c.** This verse plainly speaks of the coming time of sorrow and perplexity,—the hours of sadness so close at hand. We find the Apostles mourning and weeping on the very Resurrection morning (St. Mark xvi. 10.). The world (See on vii. 7.) meanwhile rejoiced, thinking it had won the victory. How often is this scene repeated! Christ's Church weeps and laments, and the world is triumphant: yet the darkest hours are but for a "little while", and then the light breaks out again, and sorrow is turned into joy:—the very sorrow itself becomes a matter of rejoicing for the blessing it leaves behind it.

21. **"A woman" &c.** This figure plainly describes the sorrow of the disciples at our Lord's death, and their sudden joy at His reappearance among them after His Resurrection. It is written of that reappearance, "Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord" (xx. 20.). It has been thought that in the "man born into the world" Christ may refer to His own Resurrection, which is spoken of under the figure of a birth in the 2nd Psalm, "Thou art My Son; this day "have I begotten Thee" (Ps. ii. 7. Acts xiii. 33.). This, at any rate, was the cause of the joy foretold to the disciples. And here again (as in 16.) we may carry on the figure to a still farther fulfilment, for the sorrow of the travailing woman may well represent the present trials and struggles of the Church of Christ, which, with all creation, "groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now" (Rom. viii. 22.), waiting for the deliverance and final joy of the second glorious appearing of Jesus Christ.

A.D. 30. because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world.

22 [z] And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and [a] your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.

23 And in that day ye shall ask Me nothing. [b] Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give *it* you.

24 Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My name: ask, and ye shall receive, [c] that your joy may be full.

z ver. 6.
a Luke 24. 41, 52.
ch. 14. 1, 27. & 20. 20. Acts 2. 46. & 13. 52. 1 Pet. 1. 8.
b Matt. 7. 7. ch. 14. 13. & 15. 16.
c ch. 15. 11.

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22. "I will see you again." As in *their* seeing Christ (See on 16.), so here in *His* seeing them, there is a double meaning. These words were first fulfilled when He suddenly stood among the wondering Apostles on the evening of His Resurrection. They are fulfilled in a second sense by His spiritual presence with His Church "even unto "the end of the world." This presence, discerned by the eye of faith, is the source of all true joy and peace amid the conflicts and troubles of the world. The world rejoiced when Christ died, but how short and bitter a joy was that! How fleeting are even the purest earthly joys! But they that rejoice in the sense of Christ's presence have a joy which no earthly troubles can wholly cloud over, and which will shine forth in all its brightness for ever, when earthly troubles are over.

23. "In that day." By "that day" is meant, not the time between the Resurrection and the Ascension (for then the Apostles did ask our Lord questions), but the time of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. This verse will be wrongly understood, if we do not observe that in the Greek the word translated "ask" in this first sentence, is quite a different word from that which is used in the latter part of this verse, and twice in the next. This first "ask" means 'ask questions.' In the other places it means 'ask in prayer.' So what our Lord here says is, that in the day of enlightenment by the Holy Spirit the Apostles would no longer need to seek from Him an explanation of their doubts and difficulties, since the "Spirit of Truth" would make all things plain to them. He then goes on to speak of the blessedness of prayer in His Name, probably referring chiefly to that very enlightenment of the Spirit, which He had long before said God would give to those that ask Him (See St. Luke xi. 13., and compare St. James i. 5., and see on xiv. 13.).

24. "Hitherto have ye asked" &c. Observe, the Prayer our Lord Himself had taught them was not *in words* offered in His Name. It could not be before the Atonement was wrought which wins acceptance for all our prayers. But, being His own words, the Lord's Prayer is now *in effect* most truly offered through Him. "Ask, and ye shall "receive" is not merely a repetition of the words in the Sermon on the Mount (St. Matt. vii. 7.), for here the meaning is, 'Ask *in My Name*, 'and ye shall receive.' The Sacrifice is just about to be offered; and now Jesus teaches its all-prevailing power. The certainty that our prayers are answered in love and wisdom for Christ's sake is a new source of joy beyond that of the sense of Christ's presence (See 22.).

25 These things have I spoken unto you in [2] proverbs: but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in [3] proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father. A.D. 30.

[2] Or, *parables.*

[3] Or, *parables.*

26 [d] At that day ye shall ask in My name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you:

[d] ver. 23.

27 [e] for the Father Himself loveth you, because ye have loved Me, and [f] have believed that I came out from God.

[e] ch. 14. 21, 23.

[f] ver. 30. ch. 3. 13. & 17. 8.

28 [g] I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.

[g] ch. 13. 3.

29 His disciples said unto Him, Lo, now speakest Thou plainly, and speakest no [4] proverb.

[4] Or, *parable.*

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25. "**In proverbs.**" That is, 'in dark sayings', for such must many of our Lord's words have been to them. Even to us, for whom the Holy Spirit has unfolded so much of the meaning, through the teaching of Scripture and the faith of the Church, many of Christ's sayings are hard to understand. They must have been harder still when uttered.

"**The time cometh.**" This "time" is the same as "that day" (in 23.)—the time of the Holy Spirit's out-pouring and of His abiding presence with the Church.

26. "**I say not unto you,**" &c. Our Lord does not mean to say, that He will not intercede for His own, for this we know He ever liveth to do for us. His meaning may be thus unfolded: 'Ye shall 'pray in My Name; and I make no mention *now* of My praying for 'you, as though you could not of yourselves approach God, or as 'though God did not love you; for in My Atonement you shall have 'free access to the Father, and need not shrink from Him as if He 'were angry with you.' With such freedom of approach to the Father through Christ is it not wonderful that any should teach—not that the sinner needs Christ's prayers to bring him to God, but—that the sinner needs the prayers of the blessed Virgin Mary and other saints to bring him to Christ?

27. "**Because ye have loved Me,**" &c. Thus is God pleased to accept and bless the love and faith of Christ's disciples, imperfect though they be. They may love little; but God loves much.

28. "**I came forth**" &c. This distinct declaration of our Lord's Divine pre-existence should be carefully marked. Do we ask what and where He was before "He came forth from the Father"? Let the Evangelist answer us:—"In the beginning was the Word, and the "Word was with God, and the Word was God" (i. 1.).

29. "**Now speakest Thou plainly.**" So in their weakness they thought, yet "that day" was not yet come. The last words our Saviour had uttered seemed to them plain, and were doubtless plainer than some of His words; yet so little did they understand His sayings that, as St. Augustine says, "they did not so much as understand

A.D. 30.

30 Now are we sure that [h] Thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask Thee: by this [i] we believe that Thou camest forth from God.

31 Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe?

32 [k] Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, [l] every man to [2] his own, and shall leave Me alone: and [m] yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me.

33 These things I have spoken unto you, that [n] in Me ye might have peace. [o] In the world ye shall

h ch. 21. 17.
i ver. 27. ch. 17. 8.
k Matt. 26. 31. Mark 14. 27.
l ch. 20. 10.
2 Or, *his own home.*
m ch. 8. 29. & 14. 10, 11.
n Isai. 9. 6. ch. 14. 27. Rom. 5. 1. Eph. 2. 14. Col. 1. 20.
o ch. 15. 19, 20, 21. 2 Tim. 3. 12.

"that they understood them not." They mistook a little ray of light for the fires of Pentecost.

30. "Now are we sure" &c. It is plain from these words that Christ had answered the thoughts of their minds,—the questions they longed to ask, but had not courage to ask. He had told them that at "that day" they should ask Him nothing—no questions. They feel as though even now they could be content to ask nothing, but reverently to listen to the unfolding of their doubts and the enlightenment of their ignorance. As new gleams of light enter their souls, they feel their faith strengthened, and believe more clearly in the Divine origin of their Lord.

31. "Do ye now believe?" That is, 'Have ye so strong and clear 'a faith?' The question is asked in loving sadness, for He who knew their hearts knew how really weak and dim their faith was.

32. "Ye shall be scattered," &c. "His own" here means 'his own 'home', or 'his own place.' Each would flee his own way. This is the same prediction which is given in St. Matthew in other words, where we read, "All ye shall be offended because of Me this night" (St. Matt. xxvi. 31.). It was fulfilled when "All the disciples forsook "Him and fled" (St. Matt. xxvi. 56.).

"Not alone." The Son could never be really separated from the Father. The "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" was the cry of the *Human* Soul suffering for us that pang of human desolation which is bitterest of all to bear; but we know God had not really forsaken Him (See on St. Matt. xxvii. 46.). In a lower sense the Christian is "not alone, because the Father is with" him. Though all men forsake him, God will never leave him nor forsake him.

33. "Ye might have peace." This great discourse begins with "Let not your heart be troubled" (xiv. 1.). It ends with peace and victory. Yet it is peace through tribulation, and victory after a battle. Christ does not only *promise* "peace" when the Comforter comes. The promise of the Comforter, with all His other sayings, is to give the disciples *present* peace. Yet had they for the present more trouble than peace, because their faith was dim (See concerning the gift of peace on xiv. 27.).

"In the world" &c. The joy and peace spoken of are not to be *outward* joy and peace. Outwardly Christ's people must have tribulation,—often more tribulation than the wicked. But this cannot rob them of their inward joy and peace (See 1 St. Pet. i. 6.).

have tribulation: [p] but be of good cheer; [q] I have overcome the world. A. D. 30.

[p] ch. 14. 1.
[q] Rom. 8. 37. 1 John 4. 4. & 5. 4.

CHAPTER XVII.

1 *Christ prayeth to His Father to glorify Him,* 6 *to preserve His apostles,* 11 *in unity,* 17 *and truth,* 20 *to glorify them, and all other believers with Him in heaven.*

THESE words spake Jesus, and lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said, Father, [a] the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee:

[a] ch. 12. 23. & 13. 32.

"I have overcome the world." He had already overcome the world, having conquered the prince of this world. He was just about to redeem the world by His own all-prevailing Sacrifice on the Cross, and thus yet more mightily to overcome it, and its evil. And His people, as being not of the world, but of and in Him, overcome the world too. It shall not, and cannot, prevail to hurt them. Its tribulations do not make them faint, nor its temptations fall. Mark St. John's words in another place; "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that "believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" (1 St. John v. 5.). And St. Paul's, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through "our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. xv. 57.).

CHAPTER XVII.

Christ's parting Prayer.

Few passages in all God's word are so sublime or so affecting as this. Simple in language yet full of deep meaning,—a prayer spoken to the Father by the Son as our great High-Priest interceding for us, yet spoken aloud that it might be recorded for our instruction and example, —its every word should be thoughtfully and prayerfully pondered.

1. **"These words" &c.** By "these words" is meant the whole discourse in the three preceding chapters. The Prayer which follows was probably uttered before leaving the Upper Chamber (See on xiv. 31.).

"Father." "Not '*Our* Father',—which He could never say,—nor "'*My* Father',—which would be too great a separation between Him-"self and His for such a prayer (See St. Matt. xxvi. 39, 42., where He "prays for Himself only),—but simply "FATHER";—that great Name "in which all the mystery of Redemption is summed up" (*Alford.*).

"The hour is come;" &c. Nearer and nearer had been drawing that hour—the heaviest laden with awful agony, yet the heaviest laden also with triumph and glory, in all the world's history. Again and again had Jesus announced its near approach; yet ever through the agony shone out the glory. The way to the Crown was through the Cross; yet the Cross was lit with the brightness of the Crown, till, when it came very close to Him in Gethsemane, its black shadow was suffered for a moment to hide all the glory beyond. But this was not quite yet. Mark how Jesus prays for that which He sees clearly before Him. Promise never shuts out prayer. In the glorifying Jesus doubtless foresees not only His Death, though that was necessary to

A. D. 30.

2 [b] as Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many [c] as Thou hast given Him.

3 And [d] this is life eternal, that they might know Thee [e] the only true God, and Jesus Christ, [f] whom Thou hast sent.

4 [g] I have glorified Thee on the earth: [h] I have finished the work [i] which Thou gavest Me to do.

[b] Dan. 7. 14. Mat. 11. 27. & 28. 18. ch. 3. 35. & 5. 27. 1 Cor. 15. 25, 27. Phil. 2. 10. Heb. 2. 8.
[c] ver. 6, 9, 24. ch. 6. 37.
[d] Isai. 53. 11. Jer. 9. 24.
[e] 1 Cor. 8. 4. 1 Thes. 1. 9.
[f] ch. 3. 34. & 5. 36, 37. & 6. 29, 57. & 7. 29. & 10. 36. & 11. 42.
[g] ch. 13. 31. & 14. 13.
[h] ch. 4. 34. & 5. 36. & 9. 3. & 19. 30.
[i] ch. 14. 31. & 15. 10.

His glory, but His Resurrection, His Ascension, and the coming of the Holy Ghost (See on xii. 23, 28. xiii. 31, 32.).

2. "As Thou hast" &c. That is, 'Even as Thou hast in Thy 'eternal decrees given Him power over all the world.' This power had before been proclaimed by St. John the Baptist, who said "The "Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His Hand" (iii. 35.). Yet this power was not fully confirmed and established till the work of Redemption was finished, and the Redeemer, about to ascend up on high and to sit on the Right Hand of God, exclaimed, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth" (St. Matt. xxviii. 18.).

"That He should give" &c. This was the great end and object of the gift to the Saviour of His kingly power over all flesh. He reigns to save. But we must note here a gift within a gift. There is the Father's great gift to the Son of "all flesh"—that is, 'all man-'kind'. But within this is the lesser circle of "as many as Thou "hast given Him". To these—God's elect, led by the Spirit, drawn to Christ (See vi. 44.), believing in Christ, loving Christ,—the Father's best gift to the Son,—He giveth eternal life. These are they who have "received" Christ's words, and "believed" in Him (See 8.). It is then in the salvation of these that Christ is glorified, and that the Father is glorified in Him.

3. "This is life eternal," &c. To *know God*—by which is meant no mere head knowledge, but a deep personal abiding union with Him through faith and by the Holy Spirit—this is (in present possession, not in mere future expectation,) "life eternal." The life, which shall live on for ever in heaven is actually begun here below in those who thus know God. So Christ says of him that believeth on Him, as well as of him that eateth His Flesh and drinketh His Blood,—that he "*hath* everlasting life" (See v. 24. vi. 47, 54., and Compare St. John the Baptist's words iii. 36.). Observe the words of the 2nd Collect in Morning Prayer, "In knowledge of whom" (that is, in knowing whom) "standeth our eternal life",—words plainly taken from the present verse. It is important to note that the knowledge of Jesus Christ Himself is coupled with that of the Father, as of equal necessity,—as equally "life eternal". No man can know the Father without know-ing the Son.

4. "I have glorified" &c. These words, and indeed much of this great Prayer, like so many other of our Lord's later sayings (See "Ye "know Him", and "Ye see Me", xiv. 17, 19.), are spoken by antici-pation, that is, before the time when they are fully accomplished.

5 And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own Self with the glory [k] which I had with Thee before the world was.

6 [l] I have manifested Thy name unto the men [m] which Thou gavest Me out of the world: Thine they were, and Thou gavest them Me; and they have kept Thy word.

7 Now they have known that all things whatsoever Thou hast given Me are of Thee.

8 For I have given unto them the words [n] which Thou gavest Me; and they have received *them*, [o] and have known surely that I came out from

A. D. 30.

[k] ch. 1. 1, 2. & 10. 30. & 14. 9. Phil. 2. 6. Col. 1. 15, 17. Heb. 1. 3, 10.
[l] ver. 26. Ps. 22. 22.
[m] ver. 2, 9, 11. ch. 6. 37, 39. & 10. 29. & 15. 19.
[n] ch. 8. 28. & 12. 49. & 14. 10.
[o] ver. 25. ch. 16. 27, 30.

Christ stands, as it were, "at the end of His accomplished course, and "looks back on it all as past" (*Alford.*). The "work" here includes those acts not yet past, but soon to be so, by which the great scheme of man's salvation was perfected.

5. **"With Thine own Self" &c.** The glory our Lord here prays for is the glory of His Human nature. Or, more exactly, He prays the Father to exalt His now twofold nature—Godhead and Manhood for ever united—to the glory which, as God alone, He had from all eternity with the Father. At His Ascension His Human Body entered that glory, and being set down at the Right Hand of God, was, and is, with the Father in glory. "Before the world was" answers to "In the beginning" (i. 1.), and signifies 'Before any thing was created'. What grander witness could we ask for to the eternal Godhead of Christ?

6. **"Unto the men" &c.** The great Intercessor has spoken of Himself. He now speaks of "His own", presenting them in His intercessions before the Father. From this verse to the end of the 8th is a sort of introduction to the real act of intercession, which begins with, "I pray for them" (9.).

"Thine they were." Not simply by creation, but yet more as being of God's true people, 'Israelites indeed', children of God, loving Him, and ready to obey His will. Jesus said to the Jews, "If God "were your Father, ye would love Me;" and again, "He that is of "God heareth God's words" (viii. 42, 47.). These men had God for their Father, and so loved Christ. They were "of God", and so heard God's words. Thus they came to Christ through the Father, being His before they were given by Him (See on 2.) to the Son. This was the natural course *then*. *Now* we are taught from our infancy to believe at once in the Holy Three in One, in whose Name we are baptized.

7. **"Now they have known" &c.** Thus does Christ accept the as yet weak and imperfect knowledge and faith of His disciples. They were willing to know and believe, and had made a good confession but just before (See xvi. 30.). And lo! they are accepted. A weak faith, if humble and willing, may yet find mercy. By "all things" we need not understand only the "words" named in the next verse, but all our Lord's works and power and glory. All these were derived from the Father as the eternal Source of all things (See on v. 18.).

A.D. 30. Thee, and they have believed that Thou didst send Me.

p 1 John 5. 19. 9 I pray for them: [p] I pray not for the world, but for them which Thou hast given Me; for they are Thine.

q ch. 16. 15. 10 And all Mine are Thine, and [q] Thine are Mine; and I am glorified in them.

r ch. 13. 1. & 16. 28. 11 [r] And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to Thee. Holy

s 1 Pet. 1. 5. Jude 1. Father, [s] keep through Thine own name those whom

t ver. 21, &c. Thou hast given Me, [t] that they may be one, [u] as

u ch. 10. 30. We *are*.

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9. "I pray for them." Here strictly begins the great High-Priestly Intercession.

"Not for the world." That is, 'not *now*'. Christ does not mean to say that He *never* prays for the unbelieving world; but *this* prayer is not a prayer for unbelievers. He is not now praying for the conversion of sinners, but for the unity and perseverance of saints.

"They are Thine." "For the Father, in giving them to the Son, "did not Himself lose those whom He gave" (*St. Augustine.*).

10. "All Mine are Thine," &c. Observe the perfect equality between the Father and the Son. "It would not be much for Christ to "say merely, "All Mine are Thine"; for of course we all can, and "ought to, say that every thing we have is from God: but it is an "infinitely greater thing to say, "All Thine are Mine", claiming "equality in all things, the Godhead itself included, with the Father" (*Peter Young.*).

"I am glorified in them." Christ is glorified in His people by the evidence they give of His power and life in them.

11. "And now I am" &c. Again spoken by anticipation—that is, before it comes to pass (See on 4.). The same is true of many of the following expressions, such as, "While I was with them" (12), "Now "come I to Thee" (13.), "Where I am" (24.). Christ regards His work as already finished.

"These are in the world." Anxiously does the Saviour think of those He would leave to be sifted by the rough handling of the world. "Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them "unto the end" (xiii. 1.). True, there would be "another Comforter", when He was gone, but the "tribulation" was at hand, and they were weak.

"Holy Father," &c. Perhaps our Lord uses this solemn title—"Holy Father"—because He is praying the Father to keep in holiness and purity those for whom He intercedes. Is not He here beginning to fulfil His promise, "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you "another Comforter" (xiv. 16.)? For how else does God "keep" His people, and make them one, except by the power of the Holy Ghost?

"Through Thine own name." There is little doubt that the true reading here should be rendered, 'Keep them in Thine own name which '(name) Thou gavest Me,' i.e. 'gavest Me to make known and glorify.'

12 While I was with them in the world, [x] I kept them in Thy name: those that Thou gavest Me I have kept, and [y] none of them is lost, [z] but the son of perdition; [a] that the scripture might be fulfilled.

13 And now come I to Thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have My joy fulfilled in themselves.

14 [b] I have given them Thy word; [c] and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, [d] even as I am not of the world.

A.D. 30.

[x] ch. 6. 39. & 10. 28. Heb. 2. 13.
[y] ch. 18. 9. 1 John 2. 19.
[z] ch. 6. 70. & 13. 18.
[a] Ps. 109. 8. Acts 1. 20.
[b] ver. 8.
[c] ch. 15. 18, 19. 1 John 3. 13.
[d] ver. 16. ch. 8. 23.

Christ prays the Father to keep His disciples in the knowledge of that name which He had manifested (6.), and would still declare (26.).

"**That they may be one, as We are.**" What a perfect and loving unity of heart and mind does Christ ask for His disciples, if it can be compared to that bond of unity by which the Father and the Son are united in the One Godhead! And who will dare to despise unity when it is thus the first great subject of Christ's intercessions! There is but one thing which should be dearer to the Christian, and that is Truth. Alas! that in these days we must sometimes choose between them! The unity of believers is more fully unfolded farther on (in 21.).

12. "**None of them is lost,**" &c. We learn here the startling truth that the traitor himself was one of those whom the Father gave to Christ, and who might have been saved, had he not wilfully resisted grace (See on vi. 70.). Moreover when we recollect our Lord's words, "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me" (vi. 37.), we can scarcely doubt that Judas did at first come to Christ in a true conversion. Yet he soon suffered his besetting sin to creep in again, and, having been "exalted to heaven", he was "thrust down to hell" (St. Luke x. 15.). By "son of perdition" is meant one fit only for destruction. The expression is like that of "child of hell" (St. Matt. xxiii. 15.). The "scripture" here referred to is doubtless that which St. Peter, in speaking of Judas, quotes from the 109th Psalm, "Let "his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his "bishoprick let another take" (Acts i. 20.). Observe the allusion to the present words of our Lord in the next chapter, when a few hours later the faith and courage of the Apostles was so sorely tried (xviii. 9.).

13. "**These things I speak**" &c. By "These things" our Lord here means 'This Prayer'. The knowledge of their safety—the "none "of them is lost"—would fill the faithful ones with holy joy (See on xv. 11. xvi. 22, 24.).

14. "**I have given them Thy word.**" This is a rather fuller expression than "I have manifested Thy Name" (6.). It was by this making known of God's Name, and imparting His word, that Christ had kept the faithful ones in their faithfulness.

"**And the world hath hated**" &c. This is spoken as though following naturally from the last words; and so in truth it does. For it is the knowledge of God and of His word which makes men to be "not of the world", and it is this which arouses the enmity of the world (See on xv. 18.).

A. D. 30.

15 I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out
e Matt. 6. 13. Gal. 1. 4. 2 Thes. 3. 3. 1 John 5. 18. of the world, but e that Thou shouldest keep them
from the evil.

16 f They are not of the world, even as I am not
f ver. 14.
of the world.

17 g Sanctify them through Thy truth: h Thy word
g ch. 15. 3. Acts 15. 9. Eph. 5. 26. 1 Pet. 1. 22.
h 2 Sam. 7. 28. Ps. 119. 142, 151. ch. 8. 40.
is truth.

18 i As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even
i ch. 20. 21.
so have I also sent them into the world.

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15. "I pray not" &c. With the hatred of the world before them, and the many mansions awaiting them above, it would be almost natural that He who loved them so well should pray for their speedy death, that they might depart and be with Him. And indeed it is blessed to die in the Lord. It is a blessed thing to be spared the struggle, and rescued from the peril, and taken away from the evil to come. But it is still more blessed to stay, and fight the Lord's battle, and win through Him the victory. By "the evil" is probably meant, as in the Lord's Prayer (See on St. Matt. vi. 13.), 'the evil one', that is, the devil.

16. "They are not of the world," &c. Surely these words must be very weighty to be thus repeated. Before, they were given as the reason for the world's hatred. Here they seem spoken in reference to the words, "I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of "the world", as though to add a thanksgiving that as yet at least they were, like Himself, unworldly and separate from the evil of the world.

17. "Sanctify them" &c. However much men are "not of the "world", they have still need of sanctifying grace. But we must not take the word "sanctify" simply in its common meaning of 'make 'holy', for it cannot have that meaning when Christ says, "I sanctify "Myself" (19.). Therefore we must understand it in a sense very common in the Old Testament, as meaning 'consecrate' or 'set apart 'for their holy work and office'. This in *them* would of course also imply making holy. In *Him*, already without sin, it would have the former sense only.

"Through Thy truth." Or, '*In* Thy truth'—that is, in the receiving, the holding, and the setting forth, of Thy truth.

"Thy word is truth." Many have seen in this saying of our Lord a reference to Himself—"the Word" (i. 1.), as though He prayed, 'Sanctify them in Thy truth: I am the truth; therefore sanctify them 'through living union with Myself.' There is nothing in this interpretation, which is not in itself true, for Christ is both the "Word" and the "Truth" (xiv. 6.). But it is better to understand it of the word revealed by Christ and taught and confirmed by the Holy Ghost, "the "Spirit of Truth." That "word" has been, under the Holy Spirit's guidance, written for our learning: and in it we have the truth of God. So to be sanctified by the word is really to be sanctified by the Holy Ghost, for the word is the teaching of the Holy Ghost.

18. "As Thou hast sent" &c. Our Lord is now regarding His Apostles in their sacred office, and pleading for them as 'sanctified', or

19 And [k] for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be [2] sanctified through the truth. A.D. 30.

20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word;

21 [1] that they all may be one; as [m] Thou, Father, *art* in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me.

[k] 1 Cor. 1. 2, 30. 1 Thess. 4. 7. Heb. 10. 10.
[2] Or, *truly sanctified.*
[1] ver. 11, 22, 23. ch. 10. 16. Rom. 12. 5. Gal. 3. 28.
[m] ch. 10. 38. & 14. 11.

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consecrated, to that office. Observe that the word 'Apostle' signifies one 'sent'. (Concerning the sending itself See on xx. 21.)

19. "For their sakes" &c. We have already seen (on 17.) that "sanctify" here signifies, not 'make holy', but 'consecrate' or 'set apart.' Christ speaks here of His own willing acceptance of His office of Redeemer of the world. He came into the world, and became our great High Priest, made "perfect through suffering" (Heb. ii. 10.), offering Himself as the Sacrifice for our sins, for the sake of those for whom He prayed;—firstly His Apostles, that they might be duly consecrated to their holy office; and also for us all, that we too might be sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

20. "Neither pray I" &c. The Lord now widens the bounds of His intercession, and embraces the whole Church to the end of time. Thus did He begin for us those prevailing intercessions which He ever liveth to make for us. If He thought of us then, can He forget us now?

"Through their word." Which yet is not "*their* word", but the word of the Father, which the Son gave (See 14.),—the word of the Son, for He taught it on the earth,—the word of the Holy Ghost,—for He stored it up for us in holy Scripture, and brings it home to men's hearts by the living voice of the Church.

21. "That they all may be one." Blessed Communion of Saints, knitting together in holy oneness all ages and generations of the Church of Christ! God forgive us for the "carnal" mind and tempers which have so marred this blessed unity (See 1 Cor. iii. 3.).

"As Thou, Father," &c. Quite literally this sentence would be translated as follows: 'As thou, Father, in Me, and I in Thee, that 'they also may in Us be one.' Jesus does not say, 'That *we* may all 'be one', for we cannot be one with God in the same exalted sense in which the Father and the Son are one: but 'That *they* may in Us be 'one', for we can be one with our fellow Christians, *in Christ*, and so *in the Father* as One with Him. The unity of Christians with one another through union with Christ is well set forth in the parable of the Vine, but just spoken by our Lord (See on xv. 1.).

"That the world may believe" &c. That is, that unbelievers, seeing the unity of Christians, may acknowledge that the religion that can bear such fruits is of God. Some will say that all the unity God requires in Christians is inward spiritual unity. If there were nothing else (and surely there is abundance) to shew that God looks also for outward and visible unity, this verse were enough. For it is the *sight* of Christian unity, which must therefore be *visible*, which is to convince

A. D. 30.

22 And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have
[n] given them; [n] that they may be one, even as We
are one:

[n] ch. 14. 20. 1 John 1. 3. & 3. 24.

[o] Col. 3. 14.

23 I in them, and Thou in Me, [o] that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me.

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the world. Can we read these words, and then look upon the Church of Christ in the present day, without falling down in deepest self-abasement, and confessing that the world, when it beholds our miserable divisions, may well doubt of our faith itself? In early times we read that the enemies of Christ were forced to exclaim, 'See how these Chris-'tians love one another!'

22. "The glory." What "glory" had the Father given to Christ? Not the glory which He had before the world was, for this He had of His own will laid aside to become Man. Yet He prays, "Glorify "Thou Me", that is, 'Exalt Me in My now double Nature,—receive Me 'back, now Man as well as God, into the glory which, as God alone, I 'possessed from all eternity' (See on 5.), and this prayer Jesus doubtless regards as already granted. It is then the glory which was bestowed on His Human Nature, so that it should be exalted to the Right Hand of God, of which He here speaks. But how has Christ given this glory to His disciples? Partly because all those who are united to Him are glorified with Him, for God "hath raised us up together, and made us "sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph. ii. 6.). The overflowings of His glory, as it were, fall upon them and glorify them. It is glorious to belong to One so glorious. And they who are changed into the image of Christ, advance "from glory to glory" (2 Cor. iii. 18.), so that it is written that whom God "justified, them He also glorified" (Rom. viii. 30.). But doubtless the Redeemer is also gazing forward into a purer and holier brightness, and beholding as already accomplished the full and final glorification of His saints, when they shall be changed into the likeness of His "glorious Body", and "behold" His "glory" (24.) with undazzled eyes.

"That they may be one." Again this yearning prayer for unity! Oh how blessed a thing must this be, which is thus again and again the subject of the Saviour's petitions! But here there is a new thought; for Christ declares that His gift of glory is in order that Christians may be one. The thought of their union with their glorified Lord, and the hope of a glory where all is love, should surely be to Christians a holy bond of unity.

23. "I in them," &c. It is by the indwelling of the God who is One, and who is Love, that Christians must dwell in oneness and love. "Our Lord seems to have a vision, if we may venture so to speak, of "His Church as one body, penetrated with the Divine Spirit, radiant "with the brightness of His presence, its members living together in "faith and love, the kingdom of heaven upon earth, exhibiting such a "spectacle of love and holiness that the world might be led to acknow-"ledge that they were the special objects of the Father's love" (*Peter Young.*). Oh! when shall this vision be realized?

A. D. 30.

24 [p] Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me: [q] for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world.

25 O righteous Father, [r] the world hath not known Thee: but [s] I have known Thee, and [t] these have known that Thou hast sent Me.

[p] ch. 12. 26. & 14. 3. 1 Thess. 4. 17.
[q] ver. 5.
[r] ch. 15. 21. & 16. 3.
[s] ch. 7. 29. & 8. 55. & 10. 15.
[t] ver. 8. ch. 16. 27.

24. "Father, I will" &c. Blessed "will"! May it be accomplished in us! This verse needs more loving and thankful contemplation than searching explanation. Christ *wills:* and "it is the Father's good plea-"sure" also (St. Luke xii. 32.). If it come not to pass, on whom shall we charge it? Before, Christ had said the "where I am" (See on xii. 26.), but then there was present to Him a way of sorrow before the glory. Now He only looks onward to the glory, and oh how full of perfect bliss is *this* "where I am"! The words "which Thou gavest "Me", as describing Christ's glory, should probably be understood, as before (See on 5. and 22.), of the glory which shone forth after the Ascension in His glorified Humanity.

"For Thou lovedst Me" &c. That eternal love of the Father to the Son is one part of His glory; and to behold this love glorifying the Son as Man—nay more, as the **"Lamb slain** from the foundation of the "world" (Rev. xiii. 8.)—will be the beholding of His glory. Some of the fathers supposed the love here named to mean the love of the Father towards the *Man* Christ Jesus, who was to come—the future incarnate Saviour, and not towards the Son in His eternal Godhead. But in speaking of things belonging to the mystery of the Holy Trinity, we would speak with great humility, and as men who from their dim distance see but the outskirts of the glorious things of which they speak.

25. "O righteous Father," &c. Before He closes the Lord turns His gaze for one moment on the other side of the picture—on the world which knoweth not God. It seems to be with the thought of the great final severance between those whom the Father had given Him and the world that Christ uses (for this once only, as "Holy Father" before) the title "Righteous Father." It is as though He said, 'The world 'hath not known Thee, having refused to know, and I leave it to Thy 'righteousness,—it must perish.'

"But I have known Thee," &c. He cannot end with the thought of the lost world. Once more He utters the heavenly truth, to which He had often borne witness before (See vii. 29. viii. 55. x. 15.), and declares His knowledge of the Father. But who shall sound the depths of this knowledge? We use a word of earth to express a reality of heaven. But even here He rests not. His last thought is not of Himself. Drawn up to heaven, He bends down His loving gaze once more to earth, and speaks of His own:—"These", perhaps by gesture, alluding to the group of adoring and marvelling Apostles—"These have "known that Thou hast sent Me" (See on 7.).

24. "*That they also,*" &c. There is a peculiar expression in the Greek here, according to some of the best copies, which it is difficult to convey in English. It is literally, 'I will that *that which* 'Thou hast given Me—even that they 'be with Me'. Our Lord embraces all the Church in one thought and one word —the whole of God's gift is summed up in the '*that which* Thou hast given'. The expression is precisely like that in vi. 37.

A.D. 30.

26 [u] And I have declared unto them Thy name, and will declare *it:* that the love [x] wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them.

[u] ver. 6. ch. 15. 15.
[x] ch. 15. 9.

CHAPTER XVIII.

1 *Judas betrayeth Jesus.* 6 *The officers fall to the ground.* 10 *Peter smiteth off Malchus' ear.* 12 *Jesus is taken, and led unto Annas and Caiaphas.* 15 *Peter's denial.* 19 *Jesus examined before Caiaphas.* 28 *His arraignment before Pilate.* 36 *His kingdom.* 40 *The Jews ask Barabbas to be let loose.*

[a] Matt. 26. 36. Mark 14. 32. Luke 22. 39.
[b] 2 Sam. 15. 23.

WHEN Jesus had spoken these words, [a] He went forth with His disciples over [b] the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which He entered, and His disciples.

[c] Luke 21. 37. & 22. 39.

2 And Judas also, which betrayed Him, knew the place: [c] for Jesus ofttimes resorted thither with His disciples.

[d] Acts 1. 16.

3 [d] Judas then, having received a band *of men*

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26. "I have declared" &c. Already He had revealed much: He is about to reveal more, partly in person after His Resurrection, but still more by the Holy Spirit after Pentecost.

"That the love" &c. That is, 'That Thou mayest love them with 'the same Fatherly love wherewith Thou hast loved Me.' Being in Christ, and Christ in them, the love which is poured on Him overflows them also.

We cannot close this most heavenly chapter without confessing how unworthy our dull hearts and dim faith are to handle such mighty mysteries. Even through our clouds of ignorance we catch glimpses of surpassing glory: and more and brighter glimpses the oftener and the longer we gaze. Yet we wait for the Light Himself to show us its perfect glory, when there shall be clouds no more.

Meanwhile shall Christ thus pray for us, and all His prayers be in vain?

CHAPTER XVIII.

1—12. The betrayal and taking of Jesus.

St. Matt. xxvi. 47—56. St. Mark xiv. 43—51. St. Luke xxii. 47—53.

1. "A garden." It need scarcely be said that this is Gethsemane. The Agony in the garden is omitted by St. John, being fully related by the other three Evangelists.

2. "Jesus ofttimes resorted thither." So St. Luke says, He "went, "*as He was wont*, into the Mount of Olives" (St. Luke xxii. 39. Compare also St. Luke xxi. 37.). Blessed are they who like Jesus, have a place of resort for holy communings with their heavenly Father.

3. "A band of men" &c. Literally, 'the band', probably a portion of the garrison on duty for the night. It should be observed that the "officers'" are no part of the "band", the sentence being much plainer in the Greek than in the English, and standing thus, 'Judas then, having received (or taken) the band, and from the Chief

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1. "*When Jesus had spoken these words,*" *&c.* See on xiv. 31.

and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, A.D. 30.
cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons.

4 Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon Him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye?

5 They answered Him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am *He*. And Judas also, which betrayed Him, stood with them.

6 As soon then as He had said unto them, I am *He*, they went backward, and fell to the ground.

'Priests and Pharisees officers (or servants)'—. Thus the company he got together was made up of Roman soldiers with their Captain and of certain Jewish officers also (See 12.). Possibly the Chief Priests had obtained the use of the Roman soldiers on the plea of taking a prisoner dangerous to the state. It may be that Judas expected his former fellow-Apostles to resist the taking of their Master. At any rate the Chief Priests might expect such resistance. We may add that the Romans were always watchful against an outbreak at the time of the Passover on account of the number of Jews assembled at Jerusalem.

"Lanterns and torches." Though there was a full moon at this time (See on St. Matt. xxvi. 36.), yet these would be supposed needful in case of our Lord hiding Himself in a house, or in a dark part of the garden. The night may also have been overclouded. Lanterns and torches to seek the Light of the world! Swords and staves to capture the Prince of Peace!

4. **"Went forth."** Perhaps out of the shade into the moonlight; at any rate so as to meet His enemies unexpectedly. This seems to throw light on the words, "Rise; let us be going" (St. Matt. xxvi. 46.). There was a time when Jesus "withdrew Himself" from His enemies (St. Matt. xii. 15.), because His hour was not yet come. Now He goes forth to meet them.

"Whom seek ye?" This simple and dignified question was asked partly with a view to the formal giving of Himself into the hands of His enemies, and partly also that He might secure safety for His disciples (8.).

5. **"They answered."** Some of those who came must certainly have known Him by sight. But the Roman soldiers would probably be strangers to Him, and this answer therefore may be supposed to come from them, or their captain.

"Judas also, which betrayed Him," &c. St. John, having been present, would have the scene vividly before his eye, as he wrote his account of it. As this strange conversation was going on, he saw the traitor standing there among the armed mob. St. John does not describe the *act* of the betrayal, nor tell us when it took place. Probably it should be placed *after* this conversation (that is, between the eighth and ninth verses), when, the multitude and the soldiers being staggered and in confusion, Judas was put forward by the Chief Priests to give the kiss which was to be the signal to the soldiers.

6. **"They went backward, and fell to the ground."** This sudden

A.D. 30. 7 Then asked He them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth.

8 Jesus answered, I have told you that I am *He*: if therefore ye seek Me, let these go their way:

9 that the saying might be fulfilled, which He
e ch. 17. 12. spake, e Of them which Thou gavest Me have I lost none.

10 Then Simon Peter having a sword drew

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dismay might very well have been caused by the majesty of Christ's aspect and words. Still it is probable that there was something miraculous in it. It seems as though the armed multitude beheld for a moment His Divine Nature unveiled before them (See the effect produced on a former occasion, vii. 44—46.). St. Augustine asks well, "What will *He* do, when He comes to judge, who did such things "when taken to be judged? What will *He* be able to inflict from His "throne, who had this power when about to die?"

7. "Then asked He them again." Our Lord doubtless allowed the multitude time to recover from the confusion their strange and sudden retreat had thrown them into. When this is past, He repeats His question, "Whom seek ye?", gazing with calm dignity upon the enemies whom He could have withered with one look, had He so willed. And again some, though it may be less loudly and boldly than before, repeat the answer, "Jesus of Nazareth."

8. "Let these go their way." Probably the multitude may have been closing round the disciples, or even beginning to lay hold of them (See St. Mark xiv. 51.), but Jesus thinks of their safety, while yielding up Himself. Divine Love not only makes self-sacrifice, but in making it thinks not of self but of others. The highest instance of this is shown on the Cross (See xix. 26, 27. St. Luke xxiii. 34.). Probably our Lord's manner, and readiness to yield Himself up, procured the escape of the disciples, which might not otherwise have been granted. Although when the disciples "forsook Him and fled" (St. Matt. xxvi. 56.) they doubtless showed a cowardice very inconsistent with their previous boasting that they would go with Him to prison and to death, yet we must remember our Lord had Himself begged that they might be allowed to depart, and, thus encouraged to seek their safety, they do not seem so deeply guilty as might at first sight appear.

9. "The saying." That, namely, uttered but a few hours before in His great intercessory prayer (xvii. 12.). Observe the one exception there named, and of course to be understood also here. We must not suppose our Lord's words, which St. John applies to this thoughtfulness for His disciples' safety, find here their *only* fulfilment. This is but *one instance* in which they were fulfilled. Nor again must we think that St. John applies the words only to the *bodily* safety of the disciples. Doubtless our Lord's care for their escape from capture in the garden arose from His knowledge of their weakness, and want of strength to meet the trials which, if taken prisoners, they would have to undergo. The fall of St. Peter may open our eyes to the peril all might have been exposed to of being "*lost*." Our Lord's care for their bodily safety was a loving answer to the prayer, "Lead us not into temptation."

10. "Simon Peter." "Malchus." The names are given by St. John

it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. A.D. 30.

11 Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: [f]the cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?

[f] Matt. 20. 22. & 26. 39, 42.

12 Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound Him,

13 ¶ and led Him away to [g]Annas first; for he was father in law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year.[2]

[g] Luke 3. 2.

[2] *And Annas sent Christ bound unto Caiaphas the high priest,* ver. 24.

14 [h] Now Caiaphas was he, which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.

[h] ch. 11. 50.

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only. Probably all reason for witholding them was at an end before this Gospel was written.

11. "The cup" &c. So in St. Matthew, "Thus it must be" (xxvi. 54.). Note two things: 1. Though St. John does not relate the prayer of agony in Gethsemane, yet these words plainly refer to it. 2. That prayer in Gethsemane was *heard:* but, as many prayers are heard and answered, not by the removal of the cup, but by strength to drink it. So with St. Paul's "thorn in the flesh" (2 Cor. xii. 8, 9.). This was not the first time St. Peter had wished to take from his Lord the cup which His Father had given Him (See St. Matt. xvi. 22.).

12. **"The band and the captain and the officers of the Jews."** All these to bind One meek and willing Captive! How foolish do all their precautions seem, when we know how easily He could have summoned the twelve legions of Angels, and how joyfully they would have come, to His rescue. "He is led like a Lamb."

13—27. Jesus at the High Priest's palace, and St. Peter's denials.

St. Matt. xxvi. 57—75. St. Mark xiv. 46—72. St. Luke xxii. 54—62.

13. **"To Annas first."** Caiaphas was at this time actual High Priest, but Annas, who had been High Priest before, was a person of great influence, and continued in some ways to act as High Priest still (See on St. Matt. xxvi. 57. and St. Luke iii. 2.). Why our Lord was taken to Annas first we are not told. His opinion, on account of his greater age and experience, may have been thought important, especially in a matter of so much difficulty and delicacy; or by some private arrangement he may have undertaken certain special duties, answering to those of a magistrate who commits a prisoner among ourselves; or, as some think, the Jews may have considered him as still rightfully the High Priest, for he was only deposed from his office by the heathen Roman power, which could not, in God's Eye, either give or take away a sacred and spiritual office. However we know nothing (See on 15.) of this visit to Annas, by whom it appears our Lord was at once (See on 24.) sent on to Caiaphas, as the proper person to deal with Him.

14. **"Now Caiaphas was he," &c.** This reference to the prophetic

A.D. 30. 15 And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and *so did* another disciple: that disciple was known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest.

16 But Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple, which was known unto the high priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter.

17 Then saith the damsel that kept the door unto Peter, Art not thou also *one* of this Man's disciples? He saith, I am not.

18 And the servants and officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals; for it was cold: and they warmed themselves: and Peter stood with them, and warmed himself.

19 The high priest then asked Jesus of His disciples, and of His doctrine.

[k] Luke 4. 15. ch. 7. 14, 26, 28. & 8. 2. 20 Jesus answered him, [k] I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in

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saying of Caiaphas (See xi. 49—52.) would be somewhat strangely brought in here, if the rest of the passage were concerned with Annas, and not with Caiaphas. It seems brought in to show the spirit and mind of Caiaphas towards Jesus, who was doubtless now brought to him.

15. "Another disciple." Undoubtedly St. John himself. His love and St. Peter's boldness soon conquered their first fears, and drew them to the scene of their Master's peril. How St. John was acquainted with the High Priest we know not, but it is probable that this acquaintance saved him from the dangerous questioning, under which St. Peter fell.

"The palace of the high priest." After the mention of Caiaphas as High Priest (in 13.), and the reference to his saying concerning Jesus (in 14.), it seems most probable that *Caiaphas* is meant by "the "High Priest" in this verse (though it is not meant to deny that Annas *might* be called so (See Acts iv. 6.). In that case Annas had already sent Jesus on to Caiaphas, and verse 24. describes what had taken place sometime before (But See *Note* on that verse.).

19. "The high priest then asked" &c. This questioning of our Lord by Caiaphas was evidently a private matter, and previous to the more formal trial or examination described by St. Matthew (xxvi. 57—65.). A very few minutes would suffice for all that is here described. The High Priest wished to draw from Jesus the number and names of His disciples, probably to seize them too. He also asked about His teaching, no doubt hoping to obtain evidence against Him from His own mouth.

20. "I spake openly" &c. This answer of our Lord seems directed against the suspicion that He had some secret object in view, and gave His disciples some hidden teaching. Our Lord declares that all His teaching had been perfectly open and free from concealment.

the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing. A.D. 30.

21 Why askest thou Me? ask them which heard Me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said.

22 And when He had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by [1]struck Jesus [2]with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest Thou the high priest so?

[1] Jer. 20. 2. Acts 23. 2.
[2] Or, *with a rod.*

23 Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou Me?

24 Now Annas *had* sent Him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest.

"In secret have I said nothing." That is, nothing different from my public teaching. I have not had two doctrines,—one for the public, and one for My disciples.

21. "Ask them which heard Me," &c. His teaching having been perfectly open, there could be no reason to question Him about it, nor any lack of witnesses able to say what it was.

"Behold, they know" &c. The word "they" in this place should more correctly be 'these'. Probably our Lord pointed to some of the officers of the court or other people standing by, and said, 'Behold, '*these* know what I said.'

22. "Struck Jesus." This is the beginning of the horrible course of insulting treatment, to which our Lord was exposed before His Crucifixion. It is a sign of the injustice and cruelty of the High Priest himself that he should suffer a prisoner to be so treated in his presence. The officer's blow was given on the pretence that our Lord's answer was not sufficiently respectful to the High Priest.

23. "If I have spoken evil," &c. This calm and gentle remonstrance of our Lord forms an excellent comment upon His saying in the Sermon on the Mount, "Whosoever shall smite Thee on the right "cheek, turn to him the other also" (St. Matt. v. 39.). It shows that such a command is to be understood rather in the spirit than in the letter.

24. "Now Annas *had* sent" &c. According to the view taken of the foregoing passage, this sending of our Lord by Annas to Caiaphas had taken place *before verse* 15, and the rest of the passage refers to *Caiaphas*, not to Annas. This accords with the other Gospels, which speak *only* of our Lord being brought to Caiaphas, and describe St. Peter's denials as taking place in the palace of Caiaphas (But see *Note.*).

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24. "*Now Annas had sent*" *&c.* A different view from that given above is taken by many. They hold that the passage next before this verse, namely 15—23, relates entirely to *Annas*, and not to Caiaphas. Perhaps such is the more natural impression of any one reading from verse 12 onwards, if at least it is known that Annas is sometimes called the High Priest as well as Caiaphas. A good deal must depend upon this verse 24. And here it must be said that the "had" in the English is not expressed in the Greek, and that the translation would be

A. D. 30. 25 And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. They said therefore unto him, Art not thou also *one* of His disciples? He denied *it*, and said, I am not.

26 One of the servants of the high priest, being *his* kinsman whose ear Peter cut off, saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with Him?

m ch. 13. 38. 27 Peter then denied again: and [m]immediately the cock crew.

n Acts 3. 13.
2 Or, *Pilate's house*, Matt. 27. 27.
o Acts 10. 28. & 11. 3.

28 ¶ [n]Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto [2]the hall of judgment: and it was early; [o]and they themselves went not into the judgment hall,

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26. "One of the servants" &c. It appears that this man's attention was directed to the Apostle by those who were remarking upon his Galilæan speech. The other Evangelists do not specially name this man, nor the fact of St. Peter being recognized as having been in the garden.

28—40. Jesus before Pilate.

St. Matt. xxvii. 1, 2, 11—26. St. Mark xv. 1—15.
St. Luke xxiii. 1—5, 13—25.

28. "Lest they should be defiled." A Jew was defiled by entering into the house of a heathen, or uniting in any way with heathens, and of course he would be defiled by going into a heathen court of justice. Such defilement rendered him unable to take part in any religious act. These hypocrites would not defile themselves by entering the same room with the heathen governor and soldiers, yet they thought it no defilement to employ those soldiers to seize the Innocent, and to urge that governor to condemn Him to death!

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more strict if it were 'Annas sent' instead of "Annas *had* sent." Still the Greek *may* bear this latter sense. If however we read simply 'Annas sent' &c., it would seem as if the sending was to be understood as occurring in the place where it appears, and so would make *Annas* to be the High Priest spoken of in the passage before us. But then arises this difficulty. St. Peter's denials are in all the other Gospels plainly described as taking place in the palace of *Caiaphas:* whereas, if Annas is to be understood in this passage, the first denial took place in *his* palace (17.), and the other two in that of Caiaphas (25—27.), without any hint of his moving from one place to another. To this however it is very reasonably answered, that, as there was but one actual High Priest at a time, it was not likely that there would be two High Priest's palaces; and that, in all probability, Annas and Caiaphas lived in different portions of the *same* large public building. This would, of course, remove the difficulty as to the place of St. Peter's denials. Still the other Gospels undoubtedly lead one to think that the whole of St. Peter's denials took place after our Lord had been brought to Caiaphas. It has therefore been thought best to adopt the view given above, and to suppose our translators right in understanding the word in this 24th verse to mean "*had* sent", and the verse itself to be a remark of the Evangelist to explain (what he had omitted to say sooner) how it came to pass that Jesus was in the presence of Caiaphas. It should be added that some think the important word of this verse is the "bound", and that what St. John wishes to record is the *manner*, not the *fact*, of the sending; which would leave the *time* of the sending an open question, and allow of either view.

lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover. A.D. 30.

29 Pilate then went out unto them, and said, What accusation bring ye against this Man?

30 They answered and said unto him, If He were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered Him up unto thee.

31 Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye Him, and judge Him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death:

"That they might eat the passover." By the "passover" here we must probably understand, not the paschal-lamb, but the unleavened bread and sacrifices eaten daily during the week of the Passover. The words would thus mean, 'that they might keep the feast.' The *true* Passover, that is, the eating of the paschal-lamb, had probably taken place the evening before (See *Note* on St. Matt. xxvi. 19.).

29. "Pilate then went out." That is, to the open space in front of the 'prætorium', or Roman court of justice, where the members of the Jewish Council stood with their Prisoner.

30. "If He were not a malefactor," &c. It seems as though the Jews understood Pilate's question as to the accusation against Jesus, or possibly the manner in which it was asked, as implying an unwillingness to try the case. And doubtless it was so. We may well imagine that there was something in our Lord's appearance and manner which struck Pilate at the first moment, and made him doubt the guilt of One so meek and gentle. The Jews however do not answer his question by stating their charges immediately, but seem at first to think they can persuade Pilate to pronounce sentence of death upon Jesus without a trial, and merely upon their word. 'If He were not a 'malefactor', they reply, 'we—we the Chief Priests and members of the 'Council—would not have brought Him here.' They stand on their own dignity, but Pilate has at least enough justice or mercy in him not to condemn without a question One who looks so harmless. They had persuaded him the night before to grant them a band of soldiers in order to take Jesus, but from the first sight of the Prisoner we find him exceedingly anxious to avoid dealing with Him. Pilate seems to have felt a sort of superstitious fear of our Lord, and a doubt whether His claims to spiritual power might not have some truth in them.

31. "Take ye Him, and judge Him" &c. Pilate seems to have perceived that the real charges against Christ were of a religious, rather than a political, nature, and therefore not such as he cared to enter into.

Probably also he did not understand as yet that the Jews wanted to bring a capital charge against Christ, and to put Him to death.

"It is not lawful" &c. Just before this time the Romans had taken from the Jewish Sanhedrin, or Council, the power of putting any one to death, which could now be done only under the authority of the Roman governor. But this authority could be exercised in two ways: 1. by giving permission to the Sanhedrin to try a prisoner themselves,

A. D. 30. 32 [P] that the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled,
[P] Matt. 20. 19. ch. 12. 32, 33. which He spake, signifying what death He should die.

33 Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto Him, Art Thou the King of the Jews?

34 Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of Me?

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and execute him, if guilty; 2. by trying and condemning the prisoner in the Roman courts of justice. The Jewish rulers were most anxious not to accept the responsibility of putting Jesus to death themselves, though they had declared Him guilty of death (St. Matt. xxvi. 66.). Indeed, even had they possessed the power, they could not have exercised it during the Paschal Feast. So, if they could get the Roman governor to fulfil their wicked desires for them, it would plainly be their safest course. It is well to mention that the stoning of St. Stephen was not an act of law, but an outrage performed in defiance of the law (See on Acts vii. 57—59.).

32. "The saying of Jesus." He had distinctly foretold His crucifixion (St. Matt. xx. 19. &c. Compare xii. 32, 33.). Had the Jews themselves put Him to death, it would have been by stoning, not by crucifying.

33. "Art Thou the King of the Jews?" This appears not to be the same identical question with that recorded by the other Evangelists, to which our Lord answered simply, "Thou sayest." *That* question seems to have been asked publicly *outside* the judgment hall in presence of the accusers. *This* was asked *inside*, and for the purpose of drawing from our Lord an explanation of His simple assent to the charge that He made Himself a King (See on St. Matt. xxvii. 11.). It is plain Pilate saw that in the answer "Thou sayest" was hidden some meaning different from that of the mere words. The Roman governor felt it impossible to believe that Jesus meant to claim the rank and title of King in the earthly and usual sense. So He took Him inside, and there repeated the question apart from the clamour of His accusers and of the multitude.

34. "Sayest thou this thing" &c. The latter part of this question causes some little difficulty, for, according to the view taken above, Jesus had heard the accusations made against Him, and had already been once asked the same question, to which He is now replying, publicly before His accusers. The meaning then must be, 'Are you 'now asking Me this question from something in your own mind, as 'expressing your own wish to know, or only because of what others have 'told you?' In other words, 'Is this your own question, or merely a 'repetition of the accusation made by others?' (But see *Note*.)

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34. "*Sayest thou this thing*" *&c.* If it is felt difficult to believe that our Lord could thus speak after hearing the accusation made against Him, it may be held that Jesus had been taken into the judgment-hall at the first, and that Pilate remained outside hearing the accusation, so that it was not made in the presence of Christ. In that case the question and answer as given by the other Evangelists must be taken as being simply a summary of the present conversation, the answer "Thou sayest" being contained in 37.

35 Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered Thee unto me: what hast Thou done? A.D. 30.

36 [q] Jesus answered, [r] My kingdom is not of this world: if My kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is My kingdom not from hence.

[q] 1 Tim. 6. 13.
[r] Dan. 2. 44. & 7. 14. Luke 12. 14. ch. 6. 15. & 8. 15.

37 Pilate therefore said unto Him, Art Thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear

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35. "Am I a Jew?" That is, 'Am I likely to ask such a question from any *personal* interest in the matter? Why should I trouble myself about it as if I had any concern in it? I am no Jew, to want to learn about the "King of the Jews." It is nothing to me.' Yet, though Pilate thus spoke, it is probable that Jesus saw in his heart a greater desire to learn than he suffered to appear in his words, and He therefore vouchsafed the true and needful answer in the next verse.

"What hast Thou done?" Pilate turns from his first question, which he seems ashamed now to have asked, since Jesus thought it possible he might really wish it answered for his own sake, and asks a different one, wishing Jesus to give an account of the acts for which He had been given up.

36. "My kingdom is not of this world:" &c. Jesus does not answer the last question, but the first; for by explaining the sense in which He is a King He gives Pilate an insight into His real character and claims, and so a chance of learning the truth, if he will. In so doing our Lord seeks not His own safety, but Pilate's. His kingdom, He says, is "not of this world", that is, not springing from, or founded upon, this world, so as in any way to set itself against the "powers "that be." It is from heaven,—a spiritual kingdom. Observe, our Lord does not say His kingdom is not *in* this world, only not *of* this world. All His teaching proves that His kingdom, which He calls the "kingdom of heaven" or the "kingdom of God", is a kingdom here on earth, though to be perfected hereafter in heaven (See on St. Matt. iii. 2.). Pilate sat on the judgment-seat as the representative of an earthly kingdom which claimed dominion over the whole world. Jesus stood a Prisoner before him, yet He claimed to be King over a heavenly kingdom greater than Cæsar's (Compare xvii. 16.).

37. "Art Thou a king then?" Force must be laid in this little question on both the words "Thou" and "King". It is as though Pilate said, 'A King? Thou! What! Art *Thou*—a Prisoner, despised and rejected, so unlike a king—art *Thou* a *King?*'

"That I should bear witness unto the truth." This our Lord

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36. "*Now.*" It may be well to point out that this word does not here denote *time*, as if it were '*at present*', so as at some future time to be otherwise. It is simply in opposition to the "if" and "then" of the former part of the sentence, and means, '*as it is*'.

A. D. 30. witness unto the truth. Every one that [s]is of the
ch. 8. 47. truth heareth My voice.
1 John 3. 19. & 4. 6.

38 Pilate saith unto Him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the
[t] ch. 19. 4, 6. Jews, and saith unto them, [t]I find in Him no fault *at all.*

39 But ye have a custom, that I should release unto you one at the passover: will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews?

[u] Acts 3. 14. 40 [u]Then cried they all again, saying, Not this Man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber.

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declares to be one end for which He came into the world. He is the "Word", in that He reveals to man the will of God and the truth of God (See on i. 1.). The connection of these words with the answer "Thou sayest that I am a King" may be shown as follows: 'Thou 'sayest; I *am* a King: *and I speak the truth in so saying;* for the 'very purpose for which I came into the world was to bear witness to 'the truth.' This would be likely to make an impression on Pilate, for, while the Jews required a sign, the Greeks (that is, the Gentiles) sought after wisdom (1 Cor. i. 22.), and this search after truth was the great employment of the best and noblest of the heathen. Jesus speaks of "*the truth*" as something real and certain, which He had power to make known. This was what the philosophers, or wise men, among the heathen laid claim to. Thus Pilate might be attracted by such words.

"Every one that is of the truth." "Of the truth" here means 'on 'the side of truth.' 'Every one who really loves and longs for truth, 'and is not content, like the many, to put up with a sham instead of 'the truth,—every such person listens to My voice'.

38. "What is truth?" Pilate asks, but waits for no answer. He is not "of the truth," and therefore he hears not the voice of Him, who is "the Truth." Possibly for the moment Pilate thought of hearing this new Teacher of the truth explain His views; but more probably he asked this question—"What is truth?"—with the half-scornful half-sorrowful feeling of one who doubted whether there was such a thing as truth to be found, and pitied one who could waste thought upon so hopeless a subject. He seems to ask, '*Is* there such a thing as this 'Truth Thou speakest of? Has any man found it? Has it done any 'good to any one?' Seemingly he did not believe in, and therefore did not wait for, any answer to his question, but went out at once to tell the Jews, who were waiting outside, that he found no fault in Him.

39. "The King of the Jews." We can hardly suppose Pilate to use this title except with some sort of mockery. Probably he had come to the conclusion that Jesus was a harmless fanatic, quite innocent as to the charges brought against Him, but under some strong and peculiar delusions, especially in regard to His being a King. Thus we can fancy Pilate calling Him the "King of the Jews" with a smile half of contempt of the accusers and half of pity for the Accused.

[The sending of Jesus to Herod (St. Luke xxiii. 6—12.) must be brought in either here, or just before the offer to release Jesus in 39.]

CHAPTER XIX.

A.D. 30.

1 *Christ is scourged, crowned with thorns, and beaten.* 4 *Pilate is desirous to release Him, but being overcome with the outrage of the Jews, he delivered Him to be crucified.* 23 *They cast lots for His garments.* 26 *He commendeth His mother to John.* 28 *He dieth.* 31 *His side is pierced.* 38 *He is buried by Joseph and Nicodemus.*

THEN [a] Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged *Him.* [a] Matt. 20. 19. Luke 18. 33.

2 And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put *it* on His head, and they put on Him a purple robe,

3 and said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they smote Him with their hands.

4 ¶ Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring Him forth to you, [b] that ye may know that I find no fault in Him. [b] ver. 6. ch. 18. 38.

5 Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And *Pilate* saith unto them, Behold the Man!

CHAPTER XIX.

1—3. The Scourging and Mockery.

St. Matt. xxvii. 26—31. St. Mark xv. 15—19.

1. "Therefore." That is, because the people would not accept Jesus as the prisoner to be released to them. The scourging was a common addition to the sufferings of those about to be put to death. It was a very terrible thing, the scourges tearing the flesh and inflicting fearful wounds.

4—7. "Behold the Man!"

4. "Pilate therefore went forth again." Doubtless Pilate thought that the punishment and ill-treatment our Lord had already endured would move the people to pity, and that they would be content. It was partly with this expectation (as we learn from St. Luke xxiii. 22.) that he ordered Jesus to be scourged.

5. "Behold the Man!" The picture here presented to us is indeed a marvellous one. The Roman governor stands in front of the court of justice, and half in pity, half in scorn, points to the meek and silent Form by his side, and says, "Behold the Man!" Surely such a sight as they then beheld would have moved any heart that was not hard as stone. Jesus stands there, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe, bleeding, wounded, mangled, yet how wondrously meek and patient and uncomplaining! Truly it was then that the prophet's words were most true, "His visage was so marred more than "any man, and His form more than the sons of men" (Isai. lii. 14.). Even the heathen judge thinks such a sight *must* stir pity in the hearts of the beholders. 'Is *this* the man who stirs up the people? 'Is *this* He who sets Himself up as King? Is *this* One who deserves 'to die?' So he would plead with them, but the sight stirs no com-

A.D. 30. 6 [c] When the chief priests therefore and officers
[c] Acts 3. 13. saw Him, they cried out, saying, Crucify *Him*, crucify *Him*. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye Him, and crucify *Him*: for I find no fault in Him.

[d] Lev. 24. 16. 7 The Jews answered him, [d] We have a law, and
[e] Matt. 26. 65. ch. 5. 18. & 10. 33. by our law He ought to die, because [e] He made Himself the Son of God.

8 ¶ When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid;

9 and went again into the judgment hall, and
[f] Isai. 53. 7. Matt. 27. 12, 14. saith unto Jesus, Whence art Thou? [f] But Jesus gave him no answer.

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passion in their hearts. It only makes them more fierce in clamouring for death. Truly "He is despised and rejected of men" (Isai. liii. 3.).

6. "Take ye Him," &c. This is certainly not a formal and distinct delivering of Jesus to be crucified, like that at the conclusion of the scene (16.). The force here is on the word "ye"; and Pilate means plainly, 'Take Him and crucify Him *yourselves*, for *I* will not do it.' But how could Pilate speak thus, if the Jews had no power to put any one to death without his permission (See xviii. 31.)? Probably he meant to say that, if the Jews chose to run the risk of taking the law into their own hands and putting Jesus to death, he would shut his eyes to it and not interfere, but that he would give no legal sanction to the execution.

7. "We have a law," &c. The Jews dare not obey Pilate's last words, and risk the anger of the Roman government by an execution without a legal sentence. They must make him partaker in their deed. So they bring forward their own law, which the Roman government professed to respect, and desire Pilate to give sentence against Jesus upon that. The law they refer to (Lev. xxiv. 16.) punishes blasphemy against God with death. Thus they forsake their former accusation, and now bring up a new one. Pilate will not condemn for the political offence of aiming at the kingdom, so he is asked to condemn for the religious offence of blasphemy.

8—16. Pilate's last conversation with Jesus.

8. "That saying." That is, that Jesus made Himself the Son of God.

"He was the more afraid." Thus we see Pilate had already felt some fear or awe in our Lord's presence. He had already been impressed by the strange mysterious appearance and conduct of His wonderful Prisoner. He was ready indeed to laugh at the idea of royal power or pretensions in One so unlike a king; but yet in this meek and harmless Man there was something which he could not understand, and when he heard that He called Himself the Son of God, the words seemed to bring to a point the vague notions which had been floating in his mind, and to explain, or at least to suit, the mystery of Christ's words and conduct so well that a deeper fear and awe crept into his inmost soul, as he felt that possibly he had been dealing with a Being from another world.

9. "Whence art Thou?" Surely it must be hard for any man,

10 Then saith Pilate unto Him, Speakest Thou not unto me? knowest Thou not that I have power to crucify Thee, and have power to release Thee? A. D. 30.

11 Jesus answered, [g] Thou couldest have no power *at all* against Me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered Me unto thee hath the greater sin. [g] Luke 22. 53. ch. 7. 30.

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not blinded by passion or prejudice, to gaze on the picture which Pilate had before him when he said, "Behold the Man!" without asking, in reverence and awe, "Whence art Thou?" But, though Pilate was not so utterly hard and unmoved as to resist altogether the impression which the picture of Jesus, suffering with such meekness and yet with such majesty, was fitted to excite, yet he seems to have asked the question "Whence art Thou?" with only a half-earnestness. He was not prepared to yield, and to receive the truth. His feeling of awe was only a passing emotion, perhaps mixed with some superstition. It was no genuine cry, like that of the Philippian gaoler, "What must "I do to be saved?" (Acts xvi. 30.). It may be fitly remarked here that Pilate's wretched weakness and irresolution and cowardice may well be looked upon as the fruit of his former wicked life.

"**Jesus gave him no answer.**" Yet silence is often a very eloquent answer. And who can tell what *look* our Lord fixed upon His questioner? *That* may have spoken better than words. But did he who before had asked, "What is truth?" (xviii. 38.), and then never waited for the answer, deserve an answer now? Jesus knew that to answer would be only casting "pearls before swine" (St. Matt. vii. 6.). Pilate would not believe, and farther light would but increase his guilt.

10. "**Speakest Thou not unto me?**" The "me" in this question stands the first word in the original, to give it force. It is as if Pilate said, 'Speakest Thou not to **ME**—to **ME** who represent 'the mighty power and empire of Rome?'

"**I have power.**" Pilate's brief impression of fear soon vanishes. He now speaks in displeasure at Christ's silence. And here comes out (though he means not to utter it) his real injustice of heart. Can we conceive a just and upright judge telling a prisoner that he has power to acquit or condemn? If the prisoner be guilty, he has no lawful power to acquit: if innocent, none to condemn. Pilate has again and again pronounced Jesus innocent. He now says he has power to release Him. Why then does he not exercise that power? Because in his heart he cares not for justice.

11. "**From above.**" That is, plainly, 'from God.' So St. Paul says, "There is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained "of God" (Rom. xiii. 1.). Our Lord does not mean, of course, to imply that Pilate had absolute power over Him, but that the authority of which he boasted was allowed him by God. And to this authority, as ordained of God, and now exercised for God's great purposes, Jesus bows.

"**Therefore he that delivered Me**" &c. Behold how the Prisoner already sits in judgment upon His judge, awarding to him and to others their degrees of guilt! It is best to understand our Lord to speak of Caiaphas in these words, although indeed the whole Council

A.D. 30. 12 And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release
h Luke 23. 2. Him: but the Jews cried out, saying, h If thou let
i Acts 17. 7. this Man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend: i whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Cæsar.

13 When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha.

k Matt. 27. 62. 14 And k it was the preparation of the passover,

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of the Jews would plainly share in his guilt. Some have supposed our Lord to speak of Judas, but it seems far more likely that He would compare the guilt of Pilate the heathen judge with that of Caiaphas the Jewish judge, than that He would thus allude to the traitor. It is not quite easy to see how this greater guilt of the Jew follows (as the word "therefore" seems to imply) from the words immediately before. If however we reflect that by the "power" permitted to Pilate our Lord means not only the authority which as a Governor he rightly possessed, but also much more that exercise of it which was to deliver Him to death in obedience to the Divine decree, Pilate having power given him to do that which God's Hand and God's Counsel had "determined before to be done" (Acts iv. 28.), then the connection is plainer. Pilate could have had no power at all against Jesus unless it had been God's appointment that by him, and by the authority committed to him, should be brought about the Redemption of the world. He was an instrument in God's Hands, unconsciously fulfilling God's decrees. "*Therefore*"—because Pilate was using his power by Divine permission, and in ignorance of the great crime he was committing in condemning the Son of God,—"he that delivered" Jesus to him, being no blind instrument in the hands of others, but having abundant means of knowing the truth, and recognizing the Messiah, had "the greater sin." We must not forget that Pilate's sin was great, for he was distinctly an unjust judge. But the sin of Caiaphas was greater.

12. "From thenceforth" &c. Pilate was again softened and touched. The majesty and gentleness of Jesus had its effect. He now makes some earnest effort to release Him. But the limit of his earnestness is soon proved.

"Not Cæsar's friend." The Jews have at last touched the weak point. They knew how lightly the Roman Emperor appointed and removed the governors of the provinces; and they threatened Pilate with the loss of his place, if he screened One who made Himself a King. They would inform the Emperor of his conduct, and bring down his displeasure upon him. How glaring is the hypocrisy of these Jews! They pretend to be jealous for Cæsar's honour, while in their secret hearts they hate his rule, and long to be free from it.

13. "The Pavement." This appears to have been a raised platform, paved with coloured marbles, in front of the court of justice, from which the sentence upon prisoners was publicly announced. The Romans were so fond of decorating their public buildings with this sort of pavement, that they carried the materials for it into distant provinces.

14. "The preparation of the passover." The 'preparation' being the ordinary name for the Friday in each week, that day being the

and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King! A.D. 30.

15 But they cried out, Away with *Him*, away with *Him*, crucify Him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, [l] We have no king but Cæsar.

16 [m] Then delivered he Him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led *Him* away.

17 ¶ And He bearing His cross [n] went forth into

[l] Gen. 49. 10.
[m] Matt. 27. 26, 31. Mark 15. 15. Luke 23. 24.
[n] Num. 15. 36. Heb. 13. 12.

day of preparation for the approaching Sabbath, this probably means the Friday of the Passover-week (See *Note* on St. Matt. xxvi. 17, and compare St. Mark xv. 42.).

"Behold your King!" Pilate, vacillating, uncertain, quickly changing from one mood to another, now turns again to his tone of mockery, possibly even yet with a hope that the folly of putting Jesus to death as dangerous to the power of Cæsar would be so clear that the Jews could not persevere in their purpose. Before, he would appeal to their human feelings with "Behold the Man!" (5.): now, he would shame them with their own folly, and show them the King who was to rob Cæsar of his throne, saying, "Behold your King!" No doubt Jesus still wore the purple robe and the crown of thorns.

15. "We have no king but Cæsar." Yet if Christ had only promised to deliver them from this very Cæsar, they would have followed Him in thousands. Mark how these Jews themselves declare the fulfilment of Jacob's prophecy, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah "... until Shiloh come" (Gen. xlix. 10.). They declare that the sceptre is departed; for they have "no king but Cæsar."

16. "Then delivered he Him." Thus ends this long morning's course of shifting, and hesitation, and half-purposes of right, and timidity, and self-seeking. Pilate has again and again pronounced his own condemnation, and he stands forth eternally the example of an unjust judge. He knew what was right, but was too cowardly to do it.

Shortly after this time Pilate was recalled by the Roman Emperor, and falling into misfortunes committed suicide.

17—37. The Crucifixion.

St. Matt. xxvii. 32—50. St. Mark xv. 20—41. St. Luke xxiii. 26—49.

17. "Bearing His cross." This is mentioned only by St. John.

14 "*About the sixth hour.*" This would be about noon, which would not agree with St. Mark, who says (xv. 25.) that Christ was crucified at the *third* hour, that is, at nine o'clock, the supernatural darkness lasting from the sixth to the ninth hour (33.), that is, from twelve to three. Thus some have supposed that St. John is reckoning according to our present manner, and is speaking of six o'clock in the morning. St. John wrote some time after the other Evangelists, and might certainly have adopted this mode of reckoning, which appears to have been common shortly afterwards. But the difficulty is scarcely lessened by this suggestion, for it makes this scene as much too early, as the other and more ordinary sense of the words makes it too late. It was thought in ancient times that the number may have been wrongly copied, the Greek signs for 3 and 6 being somewhat alike, and that St. John really wrote 'about 'the third hour.' Indeed some ancient copies have 'third' instead of "sixth" St. John being doubtless familiar with the other Gospels, it is not probable that he would use a different way of reckoning, which would naturally cause a difficulty, without explanation. Thus it seems easiest to suppose that the number has been accidentally miscopied in this case.

A.D. 30. a place called *the place* of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha:

18 where they crucified Him, and two other with Him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.

19 And Pilate wrote a title, and put *it* on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS.

20 This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, *and* Greek, *and* Latin.

21 Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that He said, I am King of the Jews.

22 Pilate answered, What I have written I have written.

23 Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also *His* coat: now the coat was without seam, [2] woven from the top throughout.

[2] Or, *wrought.*

Thus it is by comparing this Gospel with the other three that we learn that Jesus began His "way of sorrow" carrying His own Cross, and that it was afterwards laid upon Simon of Cyrene, when Jesus could no longer bear the weight.

19. "Pilate wrote a title." This was probably done in mockery, but rather in mockery of the Jews for their folly in making such an accusation against the meek and harmless Jesus, than in mockery of Him.

21. "Write not," &c. The Jews were offended at the title, because it seemed to imply that they had accepted Christ as their King.

22. "What I have written" &c. This answer of Pilate was probably a mere refusal to alter what he had written in order to please the Jews. Yet by the title itself, and by his adherence to it, he unconsciously proclaims Christ to be King.

23. "His garments." The garments of those who were executed belonged by custom to the executioners; in this case to the four soldiers, who, with a centurion or captain over them, formed the band appointed to crucify our Lord.

"The coat." This was the inner garment, worn under the loose outer robe. It reached from the neck, where it was fastened, to the feet, and was held together by a girdle round the waist. The fact that this coat was "without seam, woven from the top throughout", has been often used to suggest the unity of Christ's Church. He that makes schisms in the church rends the sacred robe of Christ.

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17. "*Hebrew.*" See *Note* on i. 42.

24 They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, **They parted My raiment among them, and for My vesture they did cast lots.** These things therefore the soldiers did. Ps. 22. 18. A.D. 30.

25 [o] Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the *wife* of [2 p] Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene.

26 When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and [q] the disciple standing by, whom He loved, He saith unto His mother, [r] Woman, behold thy son!

27 Then saith He to the disciple, Behold thy

[o] Matt. 27. 55.
[2] Or, *Clopas.*
[p] Luke 24. 18.
[q] ch. 13. 23. & 20. 2. & 21. 7, 20, 24.
[r] ch. 2. 4.

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24. "That the scripture might be fulfilled." It is well to bear in mind that this expression by no means implies that the act spoken of was done *for the purpose* of fulfilling the prophecy. It is perfectly plain that the soldiers here had no such purpose (See on St. Matt. i. 22.).

25. "By the cross." Behold the "three Maries", drawn by their great love close to the very cross itself. St. Matthew and St. Mark speak of the women as standing "afar off." This was at the end of the solemn scene; and we may believe that, having at first gathered near the Cross, they afterwards, when the darkness began, and Jesus hung in silence, withdrew to watch from a distance in awe and reverence.

"His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas." It is open to question whether these words describe one person, or two. The former is the more natural sense of the words, there being no 'and' before "Mary"; but it is undoubtedly difficult to believe that two sisters could have borne the same name 'Mary'; and thus many, avoiding that difficulty, suppose "His mother's sister" to be Salome, St. John's own mother, whom he thus modestly mentions, and who we know was there (St. Matt. xxvii. 56. St. Mark xv. 40.). If this be a true supposition, St. James and St. John would be first cousins to our Lord, but of this we have no hint. The whole subject of the relatives of our Lord is full of difficulty (See on St. Matt. xiii. 55.).

26. "When Jesus therefore saw His mother," &c. Oh, loving thoughtful care in the midst of the agonies of such a death! This was the hour when the "sword" was indeed piercing through the Virgin Mother's soul (St. Luke ii. 35.). And she would be left desolate indeed, for doubtless Joseph had been dead long before this. But the Divine Son loved His human mother to the last, and gave her in her hour of desolation another son to care for her, even him, whom of all His well-loved disciples He loved the best. This scene is a strong argument against the idea that the blessed Virgin had any other child than our Lord. If those called "brethren" of our Lord

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25. "*Cleophas.*" This is 'Clopas' in the original, the name of the disciple on the way to Emmaus in St. Luke xxiv. 18. being 'Cleopas', so that it is doubtful whether they are the same person. This 'Clopas' is generally supposed to be the same as Alphæus.

A. D. 30. mother! And from that hour that disciple took her
s ch. 1. 11. & 16. 32. [s] unto his own *home*.

28 After this, Jesus knowing that all things were
t Ps. 69. 21. now accomplished, [t] that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.

29 Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a spunge with vinegar, and put *it* upon hyssop, and put *it* to His mouth.

30 When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar,
u ch. 17. 4. He said, [u] It is finished: and He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost.

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had been her children, surely she would not have been commended to the care of St. John.

27. "From that hour." It is thought that St. John may at once have led the stricken mother away from the scene of awe, at which time the other women also retired to a distance. St. John however certainly returned to the Cross and witnessed the end (See 35.). We can well imagine with what jealous care the beloved Apostle would fulfil his sacred charge, and what holy communings these two would have one with the other concerning Him whom they both loved and adored. It is remarkable that this Evangelist, who had thus the best and fullest means of learning the history of our Lord's childhood and youth, is profoundly silent concerning it. He would lead us to adore, not the holy Infant in His blessed mother's arms, but the glorified Saviour on His eternal throne. It is no less observable how complete a silence he maintains in his Gospel, in his Epistles, and in the Revelation, concerning her who was committed in so awful an hour, and in so solemn a manner, to his charge. Apart from other difficulties, it is simply impossible to reconcile this most impressive silence with the prominence given to the blessed Virgin in the Romish system.

28. "After this." At the end, that is, of the three hours of darkness, and immediately after the cry, "My God, My God, why hast "Thou forsaken Me?" (See on St. Matt. xxvii. 48.).

"That the scripture might be fulfilled." These words may plainly bear a different meaning here from that which they bore when used concerning the soldiers in verse 24. For Christ would be conscious that he was fulfilling the Psalmist's prophecy in saying, "I "thirst"; nor is there any reason why we should deny that the fulfilment of that prophecy may have been one motive for the utterance of the words. It is needless to say that it was a cry of real suffering. Yet Christ knew that all was now fulfilled save this one feature in the prophetic picture, and sinking under the torture of a burning thirst, He uttered the cry of suffering (the only complaint of all His passion), and received the offered vinegar, knowing that in this He was but completing the picture, and willing that so it should be.

29. "Upon hyssop." It is very uncertain what plant the "hyssop" of the Bible is. Some say marjoram, or some plant like it. At all events it must be a plant with a long stalk, for it is used here to raise the sponge to our Lord's Lips.

30. "It is finished." What is finished? He that can answer this

31 The Jews therefore, [x] because it was the preparation, [y] that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and *that* they might be taken away. A.D. 30.

[x] ver. 42. Mark 15. 42.
[y] Deut. 21. 23.

32 Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with Him.

33 But when they came to Jesus, and saw that He was dead already, they brake not His legs:

34 but one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith [z] came there out blood and water.

[z] 1 John 5. 6, 8.

35 And he that saw *it* bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.

36 For these things were done, [a] that the scripture should be fulfilled, **A bone of Him shall not be broken.**

[a] Num. 9. 12. Ps. 34. 20. Ex. 12. 46.

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must be rich indeed in knowledge of Christ; for that little word "It" contains in itself all that the Redeemer came to do—Sufferings, Life, Work, Scripture, Salvation, All.

31. "The preparation." That is, the Friday, the day before the Sabbath, which began at sunset (See on 14. St. Mark xv. 42. and *Note* on St. Matt. xxvi. 17.).

"An high day." Because the Sabbath in the Passover week.

"That their legs might be broken." A cruel and barbarous way of hastening death in those who lingered on the crosses. The crucified sometimes lived in torture for more than twenty-four hours.

34. "Blood and water." It is a much disputed point whether this mysterious out-pouring can be explained by natural causes. Yet it was clearly witnessed by St. John, on whom it made a deep impression; for not only does he in the next verse declare the truth of his account in a very solemn manner, but also we can hardly doubt that he is thinking of this same event when he writes in his 1st Epistle (v. 6. and 8.) that Jesus "came"—that is, came as Redeemer—"by "water and blood", and when he speaks of "the Spirit and the water "and the blood" as bearing witness on earth. Certainly the water and the blood did bear witness in the most powerful way to the reality of Christ's Death and Sacrifice, so that none could doubt that He truly died. It is also probable that one object St. John had in stating this fact so forcibly was to show the error of certain false teachers who in his days held that the Body of Jesus was but an appearance, and that He did not really suffer. The water and the blood have always been regarded as types of the two Sacraments, flowing from Christ, and drawing their life-giving power from His Death.

35. "He that saw it." St. John never names himself, but no one can mistake his meaning here. He plainly was close by (See on 27.).

36. "A bone of Him" &c. This was the command given con-

A. D. 30.

37 And again another scripture saith, [b] **They shall look on Him whom they pierced.**

[b] Ps. 22. 16, 17. Rev. 1. 7. Zech. 12. 10.

38 ¶ And after this Joseph of Arimathæa, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly [c] for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the Body of Jesus: and Pilate gave *him* leave. He came therefore, and took the Body of Jesus.

[c] ch. 9. 22. & 12. 42.

39 And there came also [d] Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a

[d] ch. 3. 1, 2. & 7. 50.

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cerning the lamb of the Passover. Jesus was the "Lamb that was "slain", and in all things fulfilled that remarkable type.

37. "They shall look" &c. In the prophet Zechariah, from whom these words are quoted, God says, "They shall look upon Me whom "they pierced" (Zech. xii. 10.). St. John uses the same words of Christ, thus showing that He is God. This looking upon Him whom they have pierced will finally take place when "He cometh with "clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced "Him" (Rev. i. 7. Compare also Ps. xxii. 16, 17.).

38—42. The Burial.

St. Matt. xxvii. 57—61. St. Mark xv. 42—47. St. Luke xxiii. 50—56.

38. "Joseph." It is to be noted that the name and the act of Joseph of Arimathæa are recorded by all four Evangelists, the Holy Spirit thus leading us to dwell with special care and reverence upon the Burial of Christ, and giving high honour to him who undertook this pious work. Like the anointing of Mary, it is accepted as a homage to the sacredness of our Lord's Body, even in death. Surely too some honour is reflected hence upon every Christian burial. St. John alone names the fact that Joseph was a *secret* disciple, though we may gather it from the mere fact that he was a "counsellor" (St. Mark and St. Luke), which he could not have been had he been a professed disciple of Christ.

39. "Nicodemus." His part in the sacred scene is also only given by St. John, as he alone names him at all. We can hardly doubt that, when he beheld the Saviour on the Cross, he would remember the words spoken to him before, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the "wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up" (iii. 14.), and this would confirm his timid faith, and strengthen him to join with Joseph in showing more open respect for their Lord in death than they had showed to Him while living. Love to Him who so loved them had made these timid ones bold (See on iii. 1.). "Already does the "power of Christ's death begin to work: so that in His utmost humilia- "tion the rich gain that strength and courage, which they had not "in His life, to confess Christ;—to confess, not the living Christ, nor "Christ risen, but Christ crucified;—to confess Christ, when to all "worldly appearance He could profit them not, and when the act of "doing so was such that all human expediency and prudence, motives "which too often operate with the rich, would have condemned their "interference" (*Is. Williams.*). Speaking of these early confessors of

mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound *weight*. A. D. 30.

40 Then took they the Body of Jesus, and [e] wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. [e] Acts 5. 6.

41 Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid.

42 [f] There laid they Jesus therefore [g] because of the Jews' preparation *day;* for the sepulchre was nigh at hand. [f] Isai. 53. 9. [g] ver. 31.

CHAPTER XX.

1 *Mary cometh to the sepulchre: 3 so do Peter and John, ignorant of the Resurrection.* 11 *Jesus appeareth to Mary Magdalene,* 19 *and to His disciples.* 24 *The incredulity, and confession of Thomas.* 30 *The scripture is sufficient to salvation.*

THE first *day* of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.

2 Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter,

Christ crucified, the same thoughtful writer says, "The Sun had gone "down to His rest; and even now, at His setting, the stars begin to "come forth, and one or two become visible."

"Myrrh and aloes," &c. Myrrh is the gum of a very aromatic shrub, and aloes from their strong bitter were used to preserve the dead from corruption. It seems that, although Nicodemus brought so large a quantity, yet the short time before sunset, when the Sabbath began, only allowed a hasty use of the myrrh and aloes, and that the embalmment was considered temporary, to be more perfectly done when the Sabbath was over (See St. Luke xxiii. 56. xxiv. 1.).

41. "In the place." That is, in the same immediate neighbourhood,—close at hand. We learn from St. Matthew that the tomb belonged to Joseph.

42. "For the sepulchre was nigh at hand." This may possibly have first led Joseph to think of begging for the Body.

CHAPTER XX.

1—10. The Resurrection.

St. Matt. xxviii. 1—8. St. Mark xvi. 1—8. St. Luke xxiv. 1—12.

1. "Mary Magdalene." The other Evangelists tell us that she was not alone, but that Mary "the mother of James", and Salome, and Joanna, also came to the sepulchre.

"When it was yet dark." That is, before actual daylight, and so as to reach the sepulchre by sun-rise. It is well for those who rise betimes to seek Christ.

2. "Then she runneth," &c. Plainly she left the other women at the sepulchre, and thus did not see the "vision of angels" which they

A.D. 30. and to the [a] other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and
[a] ch. 13. 23. & 19. 26. & 21. 7, 20, 24. saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid Him.

3 Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre.

4 So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre.

5 And he stooping down, *and looking in*, saw
[b] ch. 19. 40. [b] the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in.

6 Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie,

[c] ch. 11. 44. 7 and [c] the napkin, that was about His head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.

8 Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed.

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saw. (For the order of the events of this great morning see on St. Matt. xxviii. 9, 10.)

"**They have taken away**" &c. Mary Magdalene seems to have had no thought of the Resurrection as yet. When she saw the tomb open, she at once concluded that some one had removed the Body, and ran with this news to the Apostles.

"**We know not.**" Although St. John does not name the other women, yet these words, being in the plural, seem to imply that Mary Magdalene was speaking for others as well as herself.

4. "**The other disciple did outrun Peter.**" St. John was probably much younger than St. Peter.

5. "**Yet went he not in.**" Probably from a natural awe and shrinking from the mysteries of death.

6. "**Then cometh Simon Peter**" &c. With his usual boldness, and forwardness of action, St. Peter goes in while St. John hesitates. From this eagerness of the fallen Apostle to know what had happened to his Master's Body we may gather that his bitter penitence had already quickened in him a new love and devotion. The misery of his denial would make him doubly anxious to show his love.

7. "**The napkin.**" We read of this too in the case of Lazarus (xi. 44.). It appears that the orderly state of the grave-clothes struck the two Apostles greatly, possibly because it would be very unlikely that any one removing the Body would have unwrapped It, and left the linen as they saw it.

8. "**He saw, and believed.**" Believed, that is, that Jesus was risen. It seems that the truth flashed upon him, like a ray of the

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2. "*The other disciple, whom Jesus loved.*" See on xiii. 23.

9 For as yet they knew not the [d] scripture, that He must rise again from the dead. A.D. 30.
10 Then the disciples went away again unto their own home.

[d] Ps. 16. 10. Acts 2. 25, —31. & 13. 34, 35.

11 ¶ [e] But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, *and looked* into the sepulchre,
12 and seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the Body of Jesus had lain.
13 And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have

[e] Mark 16. 5.

Resurrection light, in the darkness of the tomb. But did St. Peter also believe? It seems most natural to conclude so.

9. "As yet." That is, up to this time. Till now the Apostles had never understood our Lord's own prophecies of His Resurrection, because they had never understood the Scriptural foreshadowings of the event, such as in the history of Jonah, and in the 16th Psalm.

10. "Unto their own home." Of course this means their present abode in Jerusalem, not their home in Galilee. They simply went back to the place where Mary Magdalene had found them, probably joining other of the Apostles.

At what time, or in what manner, during this day, our Lord appeared to St. Peter (St. Luke xxiv. 34. 1 Cor. xv. 5.) we know not.

11—18. Our Lord's appearance to Mary Magdalene.

St. Mark xvi. 9, 10.

11. "But Mary stood" &c. She had followed St. Peter and St. John back to the sepulchre, and when they went away, she remained behind weeping. That her weeping was no shedding of a few tears, but a very bitter weeping, we may gather from the fact that the first words both of the Angels and of Jesus Himself to her are, "Woman, "why weepest thou?" "If when Christ stood at the grave of Lazarus, "and wept, the Jews said, "Behold, how He loved him", may we "not say also of this woman, standing and weeping at Jesus' sepulchre, "See how she loved Him!" (*P. Young.*)

"She stooped down, *and looked* into the sepulchre." She had not done this at her earlier visit, having apparently run to tell the disciples the moment she was near enough to see that the stone was rolled away.

12. "The one at the head, and the other at the feet." The space between was empty, yet it was hallowed in that there the Body of Jesus had lain. The two Angels must have looked like the golden cherubim on the mercy-seat; and perhaps their position may suggest that they had watched at the Head and at the Feet of our Lord's Body while in the tomb, that Body being, as it were, the Ark of the New Covenant. Yet the two Apostles immediately before this did not see the Angels.

13. "Because they have taken away my Lord." The sight and

A.D. 30. taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him.

f Matt. 28. 9. 14 f And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and g knew not that it was Jesus.

g Luke 24. 16, 31. ch. 21. 4.

15 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing Him to be the gardener, saith unto Him, Sir, if thou have borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away.

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the words of the Angels would have taken from many the power of speech. Mary Magdalene's grief is greater than her astonishment. She is so wrapt in the one thought of her loss that she can scarcely heed anything else. "Her grief, we know was mistaken. She wept "because she found the grave empty; whereas the truest ground for "sorrow would have been if He whom she sought had been still there, "and had not risen. There was error in her love, it has been truly "said, but there was love in her error" (*P. Young*).

14. **"She turned herself back."** Probably she heard Jesus move behind her, or was in some other way conscious of some one being there.

"Saw Jesus standing." This was the first appearance of the risen Saviour. Not a mother's bleeding heart,—not a John's burning love,—not a Peter's bitter penitence,—but the tears of a loving, trembling, sorrowing, penitent woman—win the first vision. (For the common idea that Mary Magdalene was a penitent see on St. Luke viii. 2.)

"Knew not that it was Jesus." Probably, when she "turned "herself back", she did so only so far as to discern the form of One standing near, and not so as to look fully at Him (See on 16.). Moreover she might well fail to see distinctly through her tears. But we must not forget also to observe that our Lord on other occasions after His Resurrection was not known at once by His disciples (See on xxi. 4. and St. Luke xxiv. 16.).

15. **"Why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou?"** Thus does Jesus seek to fix the mourner's eyes upon the very grief He is come to assuage. So also does He deal with the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, questioning them concerning Himself, that the trouble being brought out into words may be more manifestly dealt with (See on St. Luke xxiv. 19.).

"Supposing Him to be the gardener." There is no need to imagine that anything in our Lord's appearance led to this idea. Mary Magdalene simply perceived a Man standing by her, and without looking up at Him, most naturally supposed it was the gardener, whom she had very probably seen in the garden at the time of the Burial.

"Sir, if thou have borne Him hence," &c. Her thoughts are so full of the sacred Body of Him she had loved so deeply that she speaks as though everyone must know who it is she means. She utters no name—simply "Him". Whether she imagined the keeper of the garden to have taken Him away for greater safety, or only to have re-

16 Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned her- A. D. 30.
self, and saith unto Him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master.

17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch Me not; for I

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moved the Body from his master's tomb to some other place now that the Sabbath was past, we cannot tell. But the confusion of her sorrow is so great that she forgets her woman's weakness, and proposes herself to take Him away, scarcely knowing what she says.

16. "Mary." The Good Shepherd calleth His own sheep "by "name" (x. 3.). How blessed was this one word, in the voice and tone she knew so well, to the sorrowing penitent. How must it have thrilled to her inmost soul!

"She turned herself," &c. She knew the voice, yet could hardly believe it true; and so she turned now quite round to gaze through her tears upon Him who uttered the gracious word. And then she saw that most blessed of sights, her risen Saviour standing beside her, and, full of joy and wonder and adoration, she threw Herself at His Feet, with the one word in which she summed up all her loving devotion, "Rabboni"—"Master." Her heart is too full for more.

17. "Touch Me not;" &c. "Strange and mysterious words! It "is difficult to understand why our Lord might not be touched before "His Ascension, and how He could be touched after it; especially "when we remember that the permission here denied to St. Mary "Magdalene was granted to others" (See St. Matt. xxviii. 9. St. Luke xxiv. 39. St. John xx. 27.). Probably Mary's thoughts of her Master were too human and earthly; and her action in seeking to touch Him too eager and unrestrained. Whether this were so, or whether, as some think, her faith being already stronger than that of the others, she could better bear and understand the refusal of the lower kind of touch,—that refusal being itself in this way a mark of special favour and privilege,—in either case it appears that our Lord "would have "her not rest satisfied with showing marks of reverence and affection "towards His visible Body, but look forward to a more blessed kind "of touch,—a touch which could not be until after His Ascension, or "at least which would then receive its full blessing." It is as though He said, "'Touch Me not now with thy bodily hands, for I am not "'yet gone: but touch Me hereafter by faith, through such outward "'approaches as I shall appoint; and be sure thou wilt be most abun-"'dantly blessed therein. Thy adoring faith and love shall receive "'their full reward'. Now that Christ is gone up with His glorified "Body into Heaven, and is present spiritually among us, we may touch "Him far more truly and blessedly, although secretly and invisibly, "than when He was on earth. If even then virtue went forth from "Him to heal all those who sought to touch Him, how much more "is it so now, when He is exalted at His Father's Right Hand, and "has all power in heaven and earth!" (*P. Young.*)

St. Leo thus gives the meaning of our Lord's words, spoken, as he says, through Mary Magdalene, to the whole church: "'I will not "'have thee come to Me corporeally, nor recognize Me by the sen-"'sations of the flesh. I am putting thee off to something loftier; "'I am preparing for thee something greater. When I shall have

A.D. 30.

h Ps. 22. 22. Mat. 28. 10. Rom. 8. 29. Heb. 2. 11. i ch. 16. 28. k Eph. 1. 17.

am not yet ascended to My Father: but go to h My brethren, and say unto them, i I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and *to* k My God, and your God.

"'ascended to My Father, then shalt thou handle Me more perfectly "'and more truly, for then shalt thou embrace what thou touchest not, "'and believe what thou seest not.'" So too St. Bernard: "Can it "be that, when He has once ascended, He would either be willing to "be touched, or we capable of touching Him? Yea, but thou shalt "be capable—by love, not by touch; by desire, not by the eye; by "faith, not by sense. Thou shalt touch Him with the hand of faith, "the finger of desire, the embrace of devotion; thou shalt touch Him "with the eye of thy heart." St. Augustine, who takes the same view, sees in the words, "For I am not yet ascended to My Father", a gentle rebuke to Mary for earthly and human conceptions of Christ, as though it were, 'I am not *in thine eyes* ascended: thou dost not yet look 'upon Me in My Godhead as one with the Father: thou hast not 'yet risen to the beholding of My Divine nature'. When any one accepts and knows Christ as God, then to such an one Christ, as it were, ascends to the Father.

Perhaps the sense of this mysterious but most instructive passage could not be better expressed than in the following lines:

"Love with infant haste would fain
Touch Him and adore;
But a deeper holier gain
Mercy keeps in store.
'Touch Me not; awhile believe Me;
'Touch Me not till heaven receive me:
'Then draw near, and never leave Me,
'Then I go no more'."—(*Keble.*)

"But go to My brethren," &c. Mary Magdalene has already been once with very different tidings to the Apostles. She is now sent to carry a most blessed and glorious message. She is the first herald of the Resurrection. Mark the love of the risen Lord, who is not ashamed to call His disciples "brethren" (Heb. ii. 11.).

"I ascend" &c. That is, 'I am about to ascend'. Our Lord's Body plainly had not yet ascended. Nor had His Spirit done so, while absent from the Body (See on St. Luke xxiii. 43.). And He was yet to remain forty days on the earth. But He looked beyond the short forty days to the glory that awaited Him, and at once prepared His disciples for that last scene. He would not have them think He was come to be with them again as before. He is now on His way back to heaven—a Passenger halting but a few days on His journey.

This is a fitting place to notice that all our Lord's sayings and doings during these great forty days are, as it were, but one great farewell. "He seems to be again and again saying 'Farewell', only adding to "each 'Farewell' yet a few words more of love and exhortation" (*Schmieder quoted by Stier.*).

"My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God." Christ does not say '*Our* Father and *our* God', as though He were 'Father' and 'God' to both in the same sense. The 'My' and 'your'

18 [l] Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and *that* He had spoken these things unto her. A.D. 30. [l] Matt. 28. 10. Luke 24. 10.

19 ¶ [m] Then the same day at evening, being the first *day* of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace *be* unto you. [m] 1 Cor. 15. 5.

20 And when He had so said, He shewed unto them *His* hands and His side. [n] Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord. [n] ch. 16. 22.

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seem to show that the words are used in a different sense, as if it were, 'My Father by nature, and your Father by adoption and grace: My 'God, in that human nature which I still possess, and your God, inas-'much as I have reconciled you unto Him'. Still, without losing sight of this distinction, we may see in the words a loving condescension which would make Himself one with His "brethren."

Let us not fail to note that, while St. John gives no account of the Ascension, he records two sayings of our Lord concerning it (See vi. 62.). The fact itself was plainly familiar to his mind. This is a similar case to that of the two Sacraments, the Evangelist giving our Lord's discourses concerning them (See on iii. 5.), but making no mention of their institution, that being perfectly well known to all Christians.

19—23. Appearance to the assembled Disciples (Thomas being absent) on the evening of the Resurrection.

St. Mark xvi. 14. St. Luke xxiv. 36—43.

19. "When the doors were shut." This fact is stated also concerning the next appearance of our Lord a week after this (See 26.). Plainly the doors were fastened as well as shut, and our Lord appeared in the room without the doors being opened (See on St. Luke xxiv. 31.). The words "for fear of the Jews" would have no meaning unless the doors were fastened; and the mention of the fact itself would have no meaning if the doors were opened to admit our Lord.

20. "He shewed unto them His hands and His side." This is a short account of what is more fully related by St. Luke, from whom we learn that Jesus suffered His Apostles to prove the reality of His Resurrection by touch as well as by sight. Let us observe that it is not only that Christ is risen which is thus shown forth to the Church, but that He who was *crucified* is risen. He is "the Lamb that was "slain." His sacred wounds are the tokens of His victory. By them is His glorified Body even now more glorious at the right hand of God. Well may the Apostle exclaim, "Who is he that condemneth? "It is Christ that died; yea rather, that is risen again, who is even "at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us" (Rom. viii. 34.).

A.D. 30. 21 Then said Jesus to them again, Peace *be* unto
o Matt. 28. 18. you: o as *My* Father hath sent Me, even so send
ch. 17. 18, 19. I you.
2 Tim. 2. 2. Heb. 3. 1. 22 And when He had said this, He breathed on *them*, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost:
p Mat. 16. 19. & 18. 18. 23 p whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted

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21. "**Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you.**" The Lord is now about to give to His Apostles their solemn commission as stewards of His gifts and mysteries (See 1 Cor. iv. 1.), and in doing so He repeats His salutation of Peace. He gives peace upon peace, as prophesied by Isaiah, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace"—the Hebrew is, 'peace, peace,' (as in the *Margin*)—"whose mind is stayed "on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee" (Is. xxvi. 3.). In this double bestowal of Peace (for Christ's salutations were no empty words of courtesy, but rich outpourings of love) the Lord had a twofold design; firstly to comfort and gladden them by His return, and secondly to consecrate and strengthen them for His departure. "Thus the first "greeting spoke of the past: 'I have overcome the world, and have "'brought life to light; I was dead, and, behold, I live'. But the "second greeting speaks for the future: 'And I so send you'. So that "we may say that the first Peace was rather for the disciples them-"selves, to assure them and gladden their hearts; while the second "Peace was through them to pass on to all others" (*Stier.*). The messengers of Christ must go forth, their "feet shod with the preparation "of the Gospel of Peace" (Eph. vi. 15.).

"**As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you.**" "Even "so"; that is, 'bearing My authority, even as I bear My Father's 'authority; speaking in My Name, even as I speak in My Father's 'Name'. This was not the first bestowal of authority upon the Apostles (See St. Matt. x.); it was rather the solemn and final confirmation of it, together with the gift of grace for its exercise.

22. "**He breathed on them.**" When God made man, He "breathed "into his nostrils the breath of life" (Gen. ii. 7.). The Son of God now breathes into the souls of His disciples the breath of a new life. How full of deep meaning is this action. The laying on of hands is the ordinary sign of the imparting of grace. This breathing is a more solemn and sacred act, a sign of deeper significance. For it tells of life and grace and power as flowing from the Saviour's glorified Human Nature. It teaches that the Holy Ghost proceedeth from the Son. It shadows forth a very close union of Christ with His people.

"**Receive ye the Holy Ghost.**" That is, for the fulfilment of the commission He has laid upon them, and for the exercise of the powers He is entrusting them with. It is true that their full powers as Apostles were to be bestowed at Pentecost, so that this gift is but a sort of earnest of farther and fuller gifts to come. It seems as though our Lord desired to connect the remission of sin very closely with His own Death and Resurrection, and so proceeded at once to bestow upon the Apostles the power to convey to others the benefits of His Passion.

23. "**Whose soever sins**" &c. In these solemn words our Lord

unto them; *and* whose soever *sins* ye retain, they A.D. 30.
are retained.

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commits to His Apostles, and through them to His Church, the exercise of a godly discipline in the remitting or retaining of sins; assuring them that their sentence on earth, as spoken in His Name and with His authority, will be ratified and confirmed by Himself in heaven. The remitting and retaining of sins answer to the loosing and binding spoken of on other occasions (See on St. Matt. xvi. 19. xviii. 18.). This power is exercised in two ways. First, in regard to external privileges, the Church having authority in her Lord's Name to admit to, and to shut out from, the means of grace. This takes place chiefly in connection with the Holy Communion, from which notorious evil livers are shut out by Excommunication. Of such exercise of discipline we have a notable instance in the case of the scandal in the Church at Corinth (See on 1 Cor. v. 4, 5. and 2 Cor. ii. 10.). Secondly, the power spoken of in the passage before us is exercised in regard to the actual relation of the individual soul to God, the Church pronouncing God's sentence in His Name by the mouth of the authorized minister. This takes place in the Absolutions of the Church. These do not imply the removal of excommunication or Church censures; but in them the Priest, as the messenger or ambassador of Christ, declares and pronounces the sentence of Christ's pardon for the comfort and assurance of His people. The doctrine of the Church of England on this subject is excellently given by Bishop Wilson, who speaks thus:— "Our Church ascribeth not the power of remission of sin to any but "to God only. She holds that faith and repentance are the necessary "conditions of receiving this blessing. And she asserts, what is most "true, that Christ's ministers have a special commission, which other "believers have not, authoritatively to declare this Absolution, for "the comfort of true penitents; and which Absolution, if duly dis-"pensed, will have a real effect from the promise of Christ." This solemn declaration may be well illustrated by the case of David and the prophet Nathan. "David said unto Nathan, I have sinned "against the Lord. And Nathan said unto David, The Lord also "hath put away thy sin." These last words are a most true sentence of Absolution, spoken by the prophet as bearing the commission of God. Such is the Absolution in the Daily Morning and Evening Prayer, in which the Priest solemnly announces that God, then and there, "pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly repent "and unfeignedly believe His holy Gospel." Such also is the Absolution in the Service for the Holy Communion, which is the most ancient form of all, and resembles that of Blessing, being partly of the nature of a prayer, and calling down the pardon from heaven;— "Almighty God . . . pardon and deliver you from all your sins." Such also is the Absolution in the Visitation of the Sick, in which it is necessary to observe that "I absolve thee" means 'I *pronounce* 'thy Absolution, solemnly declaring God's pardon for the sins of 'which thou dost truly repent.' The above will help to make clear the sense in which the words of our Lord are used in the Ordination of Priests. (See also on St. Matt. ix. 8.)

A.D. 30. 24 ¶ But Thomas, one of the twelve, [q] called
[q] ch. 11. 16. Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.

25 The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe.

26 And after eight days again His disciples were within, and Thomas with them: *then* came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace *be* unto you.

27 Then saith He to Thomas, Reach hither thy
[r] 1 John 1. 1. finger, and behold My hands; and [r] reach hither thy hand, and thrust *it* into My side: and be not faithless, but believing.

24—29. The unbelief and conviction of St. Thomas.

24. "Not with them." Possibly he was overwhelmed with sadness, and had no heart to be with those with whom he had so lately shared hopes which he now thought shattered. The fact of St. Thomas' absence has been used to teach a lesson of unity. He was absent, and missed the high privilege enjoyed by the rest. So they who forsake the Apostles' fellowship may forfeit Apostolic blessings.

25. "We have seen the Lord." No doubt the Apostles also told St. Thomas all that had passed, and how Jesus had offered to them the proof of *touch* to confirm their belief (See St. Luke xxiv. 39.).

"Except I shall see" &c. We must not think of St. Thomas' words as springing from an obstinate unbelief so much as from weakness and a difficulty in believing. He appears to have been of a sad and despondent nature, and, having seen his hopes destroyed in the Crucifixion, to have been unable to revive them upon the testimony of others. Still this does not excuse the state of mind which could lay such conditions upon His Lord, and declare so positively that nothing short of such evidence of the senses would convince him.

26. "After eight days." That is, on the next Lord's Day, according to the Jewish method of reckoning (See *Note* on St. Matt. xvii. 1.). Thus does our Lord consecrate the weekly return of the Resurrection Day by His second appearance to the assembled Apostles. And thus does He also give a special pledge of His Presence with those who on that day are gathered together in His Name.

"The doors being shut." That is, fastened (See on 19.).

27. "Then saith He to Thomas." After His salutation our Lord hastens at once to restore the faith of the doubting Apostle. He offers

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24. "*Called Didymus.*" See on xi. 16.
25. "*Thrust my hand.*" The word translated "thrust" here and in 27 is the same as that translated "put", and does not imply any force, as the English word "thrust" might suggest.

28 And Thomas answered and said unto Him, A.D. 30.
My Lord and my God.

29 Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed: [s] blessed *are* they that have not seen, and *yet* have believed.

[s] 2 Cor. 5. 7. 1 Pet. 1. 8.

30 ¶ [t] And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book:

[t] ch. 21. 25.

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him the very proof he had presumptuously said would alone satisfy him. Surely He saw in him more of weakness than of wilfulness, else He would hardly have thus gently dealt with him. Light is for those who seek light, not for the wilfully blind.

28. "My Lord and my God." It appears as though Thomas did not avail himself of our Lord's permission (for His words are a permission not a command) to touch His sacred wounds. He touches with His heart, and that is enough (See on 17.). He has seen the holy Form: he has heard the loved Voice. It is enough; he forgets his doubts and his required proofs, and breaks forth in the simple yet grand confession, greater even than St. Peter's (St. Matt. xvi. 16.), and cries, "My Lord and my God". Thus is St. Thomas' faith again triumphant. He was willing to be convinced, though slow to believe; and, once believing, his faith was clear and bold. We have no stronger confession of the Divinity of our Lord made by any of the disciples during His life on earth. And He accepts it as His due. He *is* our Lord and our God.

29. "Because thou hast seen Me." These words confirm the impression which St. Thomas' exclamation has made, namely that he did not venture to make the proof of *touch* which our Lord offered him. How gentle and tender is the rebuke conveyed!

"Blessed are they that have not seen," &c. This blessedness we may share, and it is a higher blessedness than that of those who saw with the eye of flesh and believed. Probably St. Peter had this saying of our Lord in his mind when he wrote those beautiful words, "Whom "having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet "believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 St. Pet. i. 8.). It has been well remarked that "our Lord is here adding "a new Beatitude to those of the Sermon on the Mount" (*Trench.*).

30, 31. The purpose of the Gospel.

30. "Many other signs." These are either such miracles as Christ performed throughout the great three years of His Ministry, or else more specially such as He performed during the forty days between

30, 31. These verses are by some supposed to have been the original conclusion of St. John's Gospel, the 21st chapter having been added as a sort of appendix. Even if this be so, still there is no reason for going on to assume that the 21st chapter was written at a different, and later, time. However, the appearance which these verses have of a conclusion may be accounted for by understanding them as the conclusion of the Evangelist's account of the Resurrection and of the circumstances connected with it, that event being the great crowning event of the Gospel history. In this view the "signs" spoken of would be those wrought in proof of the Resurrection.

A. D. 30.

31 [u] but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; [x] and that believing ye might have life through His name.

[u] Luke 1. 4.
[x] ch. 3. 15, 16. & 5. 24. 1 Pet. 1. 8, 9.

CHAPTER XXI.

1 *Christ appearing again to His disciples was known of them by the great draught of fishes.* 12 *He dineth with them:* 15 *earnestly commandeth Peter to feed His lambs and sheep:* 18 *foretelleth him of his death:* 22 *rebuketh his curiosity touching John.* 25 *The conclusion.*

AFTER these things Jesus shewed Himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias; and on this wise shewed He *himself.*

2 There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas

His Resurrection and His Ascension—the "many infallible proofs" spoken of by St. Luke (Acts i. 3.). The Evangelist is careful to tell us that the things he has related are only specimens and samples, as it were, selected, under the guidance of the Spirit of truth, from an infinite store (Compare xxi. 25.).

31. "That believing ye might have life." Here the great purpose of the Gospel is declared to us. The Divine record of the Life and Death and Resurrection of our Lord is to confirm our faith, and through faith to bestow upon us life—spiritual life here, eternal life hereafter. We can hardly doubt that St. John in these words looks back to our Lord's saying, "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." He has written his Gospel that that blessedness may be ours.

CHAPTER XXI.

1—14. Second Miraculous Draught of fishes.

Compare the former miracle related in St. Luke v. 1—11, and the Parable in St. Matt. xiii. 41—50.

1. "After these things." That is, after the events connected with the Resurrection, and His appearances in Jerusalem.

"Jesus shewed Himself again." This is, literally, 'Jesus manifested 'Himself', an expression which teaches us that, after His Resurrection, our Lord only revealed Himself, and made Himself visible to human sight, when and where He pleased.

"The sea of Tiberias." Another name for the Sea of Galilee (See on St. Matt. iv. 18.). Tiberias was a town of some importance on the Western shore. The Apostles had gone into Galilee in obedience to the Angel's message by the women (St. Matt. xxviii. 7.).

2. "Simon Peter," &c. We may notice that the Apostles, being Galilæans, had returned now to the neighbourhood of their own homes. Here they doubtless expected some great event to happen, Christ having promised to meet them there.

"Thomas called Didymus." It can no more be said of St. Thomas that he is not with the rest of the Apostles when Jesus comes to them.

called Didymus, and [a] Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and [b] the *sons* of Zebedee, and two other of His disciples. A.D. 30.

[a] ch. 1. 45.
[b] Matt. 4. 21.

3 Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing.

4 But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples [c] knew not that it was Jesus.

[c] ch. 20. 14.

5 Then [d] Jesus saith unto them, [2] Children, have ye any meat? They answered Him, No.

[d] Luke 24. 41.
[2] Or, *Sirs.*

6 And He said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.

"**Nathanael.**" Probably the same as Bartholomew (See on St. Matt. x. 3.).

"**Two other.**" Possibly St. Andrew and St. Philip, who came from Bethsaida.

3. "**I go a fishing.**" This is no forsaking of the work of Christ. It is simply a due employment of the time of waiting (and they knew not how long that might be) in the providing for their necessary support. They return to their old calling. So St. Paul wrought as a tent-maker at Corinth (Acts xviii. 3.). Let us not fail to notice that Jesus manifests Himself to His own, not only when He findeth them in the Temple, or when He meeteth them on the solitary mountain, but also while they are busy with the work of their earthly calling (See on St. Luke x. 42, quotation from the Christian Year.).

"**That night they caught nothing.**" Till Christ blesses the labour, all is in vain. What a lesson of patience and hope is here given to the Minister of Christ who seems to labour long in vain.

4. "**The disciples knew not**" &c. They were only about a hundred yards from the shore (See 8.), and it was morning, but the sacred Body of Jesus was in some mysterious way changed in the Resurrection, so that, even when He made Himself visible, those who had known Him well before did not immediately recognise Him (See on St. Luke xxiv. 16.).

5. "**Children, have ye any meat?**" The word "Children" is only a kindly and familiar address, which might have been used by a stranger. By "meat" is here meant 'fish'—that food for which they were toiling. Of course our Lord knew well that their labour had been hitherto in vain, but He asked the question to draw out the expression of the want He was about to supply (See on St. Luke xxiv. 19.).

6. "**On the right side of the ship.**" It has been remarked in the case of the former miracle of like character that it is vain to enquire whether in His command our Lord exercised Divine Omniscience, simply telling the Apostles to cast their net where He knew the fishes

A.D. 30. 7 Therefore [e] that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt *his* fisher's coat *unto him*, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea.

e ch. 13. 23. & 20. 2.

8 And the other disciples came in a little ship; (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits,) dragging the net with fishes.

9 As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread.

10 Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught.

11 Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and

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to be, or whether He exercised Divine control over the creatures He had made, guiding them by His will into the net. It has however been thought that there is a special meaning in the selection of the "*right* side" of the ship on the present occasion (See on 11.). The command was plainly given as by a stranger taking an interest in the success of the fishermen, and did not at once reveal the Speaker. It is however probable that in obeying the command, even before they discovered the success of their cast, the Apostles may have had some dim suspicion that it was no stranger's voice which thus directed them.

7. **"That disciple whom Jesus loved."** If the zeal of St. Peter is first in action, the love of St. John is first in knowledge. The Magdalene's love knew Jesus at the sepulchre; the love of the loved disciple knows Him now.

"He was naked." That is, without his loose outer garment, which he had laid aside that he might be freer to labour.

"Did cast himself into the sea." Probably at so short a distance from the side the water was shallow, so that he could easily reach the land. There is no reason to suppose that he expected on this occasion to be able to walk upon the water.

8. **"Two hundred cubits."** That is, a hundred yards, a cubit measuring eighteen inches.

9. **"A fire of coals"** &c. The Lord miraculously provides this meal for His servants to teach them that He will not suffer them to want, and also as a type of the great heavenly feast, in which we are told "He will gird Himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will "come forth and serve them" (St. Luke xii. 37.).

10. **"Bring of the fish which ye have now caught."** If the meal upon the shore was itself a type of the great heavenly feast, then the bringing of the fish they had caught to add to that meal would teach the Apostles that part of their joy in heaven would arise from the presence of those whom they had taken in the net of the Gospel, and brought out of an evil world to Christ.

11 **"Drew the net to land."** Our Lord's words to St. Peter on the occasion of the other Miraculous Draught of fishes—"Fear not; from

three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken. A.D. 30.

12 Jesus saith unto them, [f]Come *and* dine. And none of the disciples durst ask Him, Who art Thou? knowing that it was the Lord. [f] Acts 10. 41.

13 Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise.

14 This is now [g]the third time that Jesus shewed Himself to His disciples, after that He was risen from the dead. [g] See ch. 20. 19, 26.

"henceforth thou shalt catch men"—teach us to turn these two miracles into parables. They both plainly speak of truths very like those taught by the Parable of the Draw-net (See on St. Matt. xiii. 47—50.). But there are differences between the two miracles which (as St. Augustine pointed out) lead to our seeing in the earlier miracle a picture of the visible Church, with its gathering of "all sorts", and in the later a picture of the invisible Church, and the eternal salvation of the saints. Thus in the first the disciples are not bidden to cast the net on one side more than the other; while in the second they are bidden to cast on the "right side", the side of the redeemed in the picture of the judgment-day given by our Lord (St. Matt. xxv. 33, 34.): in the first the nets were broken, for many once caught in the net of the Gospel break away and are lost; in the second "for "all there were so many yet was not the net broken", for this is the final gathering of the redeemed, of whom not one shall be lost: in the first "the fish are brought into the boats still tossing on the "unquiet sea, as men, who are taken for Christ, are brought into the "Church, still itself exposed to the world's tempests"; in the second "the nets are drawn to land, to the safe and quiet shore of eternity": in the first we are told only of a great multitude of fishes being caught, in which doubtless were great and small, good and bad; in the second none are taken but the good, and of these a distinct and definite number, even as the number of God's elect is known and foreordained by Him (*See Trench on this miracle.*).

12. "**Dine.**" The word in the original language is used of the morning meal, and would be more correctly translated 'breakfast.'

"**None of the disciples durst ask Him,**" &c. Though they knew that it was the Lord, they longed to ask Him, and to receive from His own Lips the confirmation of the truth. But there is now something awful and mysterious in His presence, and they dare not speak. They sit down to the meal so marvellously provided in solemn silence, wondering and expecting.

13. "**Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread,**" &c. Thus foretelling in act what He had before foretold in word (St. Luke xii. 37.), namely that in the great feast of the triumphant Church in heaven He will Himself minister to His servants, bestowing on them the joy and bliss of His Father's House.

14. "**The third time.**" Not the third time of His appearance at all, but of His appearance to the assembled disciples. The two former occasions were at Jerusalem, the first on the day of His Resurrection (xx. 19.), and the second a week afterwards (xx. 26.).

A.D. 30. 15 ¶ So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou Me more than these? He saith unto Him, Yea, Lord; Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith unto him, Feed My lambs.

15—19. The threefold confession of St. Peter, with the threefold charge of Christ.

15. "When they had dined." The mysterious meal seems to have been eaten in solemn and awful silence, and doubtless the hearts of the Apostles trembled in expectation of what should follow. It may be observed that St. John usually relates the miracles of our Lord in order to introduce some weighty conversation flowing out of them. This is very remarkable in the case of the Feeding of the five thousand (vi.), and in the present case the account of the second Miraculous Draught of fishes leads directly to the following most important conversation with St. Peter.

"Simon, *son* of Jonas." Thus does our Lord break the solemn silence. Observe, Jesus never addresses the Apostle by his new name of strength and honour 'Peter,' although He had Himself bestowed the name. Yet the address, "Simon, son of Jonas," might well recall the scene when the name 'Peter' was given. (See i. 42.)

"More than these." That is, 'more than these love Me'. St. Peter had professed to love Jesus more than the rest, when he said, "Though "all men shall be offended because of Thee, yet will I never be of- "fended" (St. Matt. xxvi. 33.), and, by his throwing himself into the water to be the first to come to Him now, had again seemed to wish to be thought first in love to his Lord.

"Thou knowest that I love Thee." St. Peter, humbled by his fall, does not dare to say "more than these". He simply appeals to his Lord's knowledge of his heart, and leaves it to Him to judge of the strength of his love. It is to be noticed that in the Greek, in which St. John wrote, a different word is used for "love" in our Lord's question and in St. Peter's answer. That in the question—"*Lovest* thou "Me"—is the word that would be naturally used for the love of man to God: that in the answer—"I love Thee"—is a word which signifies a more warm and personal love, such as that of the nearest relatives. It is probable that our Lord spoke in the language of the Jews, and not in Greek, but we may be sure that St. John in recording His words would use such Greek words as would best give the exact sense of the words our Lord actually used. So that St. Peter seems to have used a warmer word than our Lord, as though to the question "Lovest thou "Me?" he answered 'Yea, Lord; Thou knowest that I love Thee '*dearly*'. In the second question and answer there is the same change of word. In the third the Lord graciously adopts His Apostle's expression, using the same word St. Peter had in his two former answers (See on 17.).

"Feed My lambs." By the "lambs" is probably meant the little ones of the Christian flock, children, or "such as have need of milk, "and not of strong meat" (Heb. v. 12.). In these solemn words our Lord graciously confirms to St. Peter his apostolic office as one of the chief shepherds of the flock. He had long ago, on occasion of a like

16 He saith to him again the second time, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou Me? He saith unto Him, Yea, Lord; Thou knowest that I love Thee. [h] He saith unto him, Feed My sheep.

A.D. 30.

[h] Acts 20. 28. Heb. 13. 20. 1 Pet. 2. 25. & 5. 2, 4.

17 He saith unto him the third time, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou Me? Peter was grieved because He said unto him the third time, Lovest thou Me? And he said unto Him, Lord, [i] Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed My sheep.

[i] ch. 2. 24, 25. & 16. 30.

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miracle to that but now performed, made him a fisher of men (See St. Luke v. 10.). He now confers on him the same charge, only under a new figure. He is to "feed the flock of God" (as he himself says, doubtless remembering the Good Shepherd's words, 1 St. Peter v. 2.). Doubtless this charge is specially given to St. Peter because he might well think he had lost all right to his former privileges by his denial, and thus the words are a solemn forgiveness of his fall, and acceptance of his penitence. Still, though spoken to him for this reason, they are plainly words which might equally have been spoken to the rest of the Apostles (See on St. Matt. xvi. 18.), and which truly describe the charge laid upon all. In receiving this charge St. Peter stands as the representative of all Christ's Ministers, whose duty and privilege it is to tend His flock.

16. "Feed My sheep." The word translated "Feed" in this place is not the same as that used in the other two like commands. In those it is simply "Feed": in this it is 'Tend and watch over',—a much wider expression, implying all the duties of a shepherd. The English language, as we see in this case and in that of the word "love" (See on 15.), cannot always express the shades of difference in the meaning which exist in the Greek. It need hardly be said that, if the "lambs" mean Christ's little ones, the "sheep" are the rest of His Church.

17. "The third time." The threefold denial must be met by a threefold confession. Fear thrice denies: love thrice confesses.

"Lovest thou Me?" Our Lord uses a different word here for "Lovest" from those He had used before (See on 15.), taking up and adopting the warmer and more affectionate word St. Peter had used in each of his answers. It is as though He said, 'Dost thou indeed love 'Me so dearly?'

"Peter was grieved" &c. We must not suppose St. Peter to have been hurt, as some have said, by this public remindal of his threefold denial. Rather this bringing to mind of his fall brought back the bitter grief and remorse of his first penitence, and filled him with shame and sorrow. This grief would be increased by the seeming suspicion of the genuineness of his love in the thrice repeated question.

"Lord, Thou knowest all things;" &c. St. Peter, though "grieved", is not silenced. He has a third confession to make, and, conscious of the true love in his heart, he speaks yet more fervently, appealing once more to his Lord's knowledge of that love.

"Feed My sheep." Thus is the Apostle's pardon sealed to him by the threefold pastoral charge. And here once more we have one of

A.D. 30. 18 [k] Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou
[k] ch. 13. 36. Acts 12. 3, 4. wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry *thee* whither thou wouldest not.

[l] 2 Pet. 1. 14. 19 This spake He, signifying [1] by what death he should glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He saith unto him, Follow Me.

20 ¶ Then Peter, turning about, seeth the dis-
[m] ch. 13. 23, 25. & 20. 2. ciple [m] whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on His breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth Thee?

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those shades of difference in the Greek which we cannot express in English; for the word for "sheep" in this third charge is slightly different from that used in the second, and implies endearment, as though it were, 'Feed My dear sheep'. If a distinct sense is to be given to the word, it would mean the souls dearest to Christ, those most truly His own.

18. "When thou wast young," &c. The threefold confession being graciously accepted, and the pastoral charge thrice given, Christ solemnly foretells to His Apostle the mode in which his love should lead him to follow his Lord. When he was young he girded himself, binding on his garments, even as he had but now girt on his fisher's coat, and walked whither he would, free and eager and forward. But when he should be old, he should stretch forth his hands for another, the executioner, to gird him, binding him with cords to the cross, and carrying him whither he would not, that is, to a horrible and cruel death. But does our Lord then mean that his servant would refuse, if he could, the 'crown of martyrdom'? No, He is only speaking of that natural shrinking from a dreadful death which even the willing martyr may experience. If the tradition be true, St. Peter, when condemned to death in Rome, himself chose to be crucified with his head downwards, because he was not worthy to die so honourable a death as his Divine Master.

19. "Follow Me." Our Lord plainly moved from the spot, as though departing, when He thus spoke; but the words, spoken at such a moment, had a far deeper sense than that of merely a present following. They mean, 'Follow Me in My path of suffering. Follow Me by taking up thy Cross. Follow Me through death to glory.' Once St. Peter had said he would follow his Lord, and failed. Now he is called again to follow Him, and now the Lord who calls him will never more let him fail: for He said once, on the evening of His Passion, "Whither "I go, thou canst not follow Me now; but thou shalt follow Me after-"wards" (xiii. 36.).

20—25. Conversation concerning St. John, and Conclusion.

20. "The disciple whom Jesus loved following." St. John hears

21 Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what *shall* this man *do*? A. D. 30.

22 Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry [n] till I come, what *is that* to thee? follow thou Me.

[n] Matt. 16. 27, 28. & 25. 31. I Cor. 4. 5. & 11. 26. Rev. 2. 25. & 3. 11. & 22. 7, 20.

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the words "Follow Me" addressed to his brother Apostle. His heart too is full of Divine love. He would not lag behind where St. Peter draws nigh. We can imagine him to follow with a wistful longing look, eager for something to be said to himself, yearning for some token of the old distinguishing love.

21. **"Lord, and what shall this man do?"** St. John asked for St. Peter at the last Supper, as we are reminded in the last verse (See too xiii. 24.); now St. Peter asks for St. John. The restored Apostle had received a glimpse of his own future; he longs, with a brotherly love, to obtain such a glimpse for his friend and fellow-labourer, who perchance lacks courage to ask for himself. It is as if he said, 'Lord, 'and what shall this one do—this one so loved and so loving,—this one 'so highly honoured, yea, chosen to be Thy adopted brother, at the 'Cross (See xix. 26, 27.),—this one who has never denied Thee, never 'fallen, as I have,—shall not he follow Thee too?'

22. **"If I will" &c.** The latter part of our Lord's answer—"What "is that to thee?"—conveys something of rebuke, though, we may suppose, of gentle and loving rebuke. St. Peter's work was allotted to him; and he must not be curious as to his Lord's purposes for others. Their lot may be very different from his: but that is nothing to him. He must follow his Lord and be satisfied. And yet, even with this gentle rebuke, the glimpse sought for is in a measure given. For our Lord's mysterious words certainly seem to imply more than what some, both in ancient and modern times, have seen in them, namely a mere supposition, as if it were, 'Even were I to will such a thing'. But before considering how much they reveal of St. John's future, let us mark the kingly authority with which our Lord now speaks. "All power" was given unto Him "in heaven and in earth"; and He says not 'If My 'Father will', but "If *I* will." He is the Supreme Ruler and Disposer of His people. And now what is the glimpse that the Lord gives into the future of the Apostle of love? The words naturally imply that he should tarry till Christ should come. By "tarry" is plainly meant 'live on earth', being opposed to the violent death of St. Peter. What then is the meaning of Christ's coming here? That it cannot mean His final coming is plain, since St. John has been long ago dead. It may however be taken in either of two distinct senses. 1. It may imply "that the beloved disciple should not "follow" Him,—should not *come* "to Him through the gate of martyrdom,—like Simon Peter; but that "he should "tarry" behind,—tarry for the coming of his Lord to him" (*Burgon.*),—His coming, that is, in the hour of death, to take His servant to his rest. Or 2. The words may be taken in the sense in which we have already seen our Lord to speak of His coming, namely, that of His coming in great power to judge His enemies in the destruction of the Jewish nation (See on the mysterious saying in St. Matt. xvi. 28. and the Introduction to St. Matt. xxiv.). St. John lived for about thirty

A.D. 30. 23 Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what *is that* to thee?

24 This is the disciple which testifieth of these
[o] ch. 19. 35. 3 John 12. things, and wrote these things: and [o] we know that his testimony is true.

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years after the destruction of Jerusalem, and died at the age of a hundred at Ephesus, about a hundred years after the Birth of Christ, so that he was of about the same age as his Master, and probably the youngest of the Apostles, all of whom he long outlived. The chief objection to this second sense is that the destruction of Jerusalem was past before St. John wrote his Gospel, and it seems strange that, had this been our Lord's meaning, it should not have been revealed to the Evangelist after the accomplishment of the event spoken of. Whereas neither he himself, nor those who adopted the wrong notion that he would not die, connect the saying in any way with the destruction of Jerusalem. It should be mentioned that some very able commentators see in the words "till I come" a reference to the coming of Christ to the Apostle in the island of Patmos to reveal to him the mysteries of His kingdom (See Rev. i. 10—20. and compare on St. Matt. xvi. 28. and xvii. 1.). In all these three senses St. John did tarry till Christ came, but it is hard to pronounce in which sense our Lord uttered the words. If this was hidden from St. John himself (See on 23.), we may surely be content to acknowledge our ignorance. Let us rather listen to that second, "Follow thou Me." It matters not what Christ may have in store for others. It is enough for us to see the Hand that beckons us on. We long sometimes to lift the veil of the future. Let us only ask to have it lifted so far as that we may see the path in which we may follow Jesus. Let us notice how the more earthly of the two great Apostles is drawn upward and encouraged by the 'Follow Me', while the more heavenly is repressed by the "If I will that he tarry". Each perchance needed the words spoken of him.

23. "Then went this saying abroad" &c. St. John is careful to correct this mistaken view of our Lord's words; yet he simply repeats those words without a hint as to their real meaning. This probably was hidden from himself; and when at the end of his Revelation we read his longing aspiration "Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. xxii. 20.), we cannot but wonder whether he even then had learnt the true meaning of his Master's saying.

24. "We know" &c. It has been thought that these words with the following verse were not written by St. John himself, but were added by the primitive Church in witness of the authorship and truth of this Gospel; but there is nothing in the words "we know" to suggest any such idea, for the Apostle (like other writers) might naturally speak of himself in the plural number, as indeed he does in his Epistles (1 St. John i. 1—5; 3 St. John 12.). Thus we may understand the words to be a simple declaration of the Evangelist's own certainty of the truth of his testimony.

25 [p] And there are also many other things which A.D. 30.
Jesus did, the which, if they should be written [p] ch. 20. 30.
every one, [q] I suppose that even the world itself [q] Amos 7. 10.
could not contain the books that should be written.
Amen.

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25. **"Even the world itself" &c.** This expression is not meant to be taken in the letter, but is a very natural and perfectly plain mode of speech to express the immensity and endlessness of any perfect record, if such could be had, of our Lord's words and works.

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25. "*Amen.*" See on last word of St. Matthew's Gospel.

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